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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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The Two Catherines

FULL FLAVOUR. By Doris Leslie. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY WENT

I WONDER how many novelists and budding novelists are working at the British Museum today, reading in old files of the newspapers, poring over long-forgotten advertisements, leafing the memoirs of past generations, studying the fashions of bygone days—all in order that they may reproduce faithfully, meticulously, in a coming masterpiece, the styles, the sentiments, the *ipsissima verba* of their ancestors unto the third and fourth generatic

This speculation is called forth by the recent perusal of some half-dozen family novels from the pens of English authors, and in particular by a reading of Miss Leslie's volume. I make the speculation in no spirit of depreciation, for the astonishing thing is that almost all of these novels command respectful consideration. I do not remember to have read a really bad one, and I have read some, including Miss Leslie's, that seem to me to be exceedingly good.

But why this uncontrolled multiplication of the brood of Galsworthy? Is it merely that the "Forsyte Saga" and "Cavalcade" have set a fashion, or is that only part of the explanation? Do these writers of today see change whirling at such speed down the ringing grooves of time that they feel they must pin the past down before it has slipped for ever beyond their reach? Is the present scene changing so rapidly that they dare not take the time to write about it? Or is it simply that English men and women, having seen a mansion that appeared so secure come crashing about their ears, turn nostalgically to the days when it was still standing and seemed as if it would stand for ever?

Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that nothing short of a saga satisfies the English novelist of today. Miss Leslie goes back to 1848, when the descendants of a French emigré were in possession of a prosperous cigar business called Hanson's, and ends in 1914, when the century-old building of Hanson's had just been demolished to make room for a mammoth hotel, and a crowd was gathered outside Buckingham Palace to cheer King George as the time limit of the ultimatum to Germany expired. I will hazard a guess that Miss Leslie is even now engaged on another volume that will bring the fourth generation of her Ducrox family through the war and up to date.

Even though Miss Leslie is travelling over familiar territory, she has beaten a new path through it, or if not an entirely new path, one that was only partially explored by G. B. Stern in her "Matriarch" trilogy. For Miss Leslie, in the present volume, deals almost entirely with the women of her chosen family—the males are mere foils to the females of the species; it is only when she comes to the fourth generation that a man, young Christopher, enjoys the spotlight, and even then his grandmother, Catherine, "steals the show" whenever she appears on the stage—much as did Ellen Terry in that rash production when she was invited to play the nurse to Miss Doris Keane's Juliet.

When lazy, good-natured Edward Ducrox died unexpectedly, he left an inconsolate widow, two young daughters, and a family cigar business that was pretty well on its last legs. Catherine, the elder daughter, who was eighteen, had already scan-

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The "immortal dinner" at Haydon's studio at which Keats joined Wordsworth, Lamb, and Landseer among others. Reproduced from "Autobiography of John Keats" (Stanford University Press).

A Poet Steadfast As His Star

BY LEONARD BACON

JOHN KEATS, in the eyes of many and most excellent judges, second in gifts only to the greatest of all poets, was born on October 31 (probably), 1795, in Finsbury, then a suburb, now part of the heart of London. Much has been written about his origins and his family which may be profitably ignored. It is enough to say that he was the son of the employee of a livery stable proprietor who had the good fortune to marry his employer's daughter and ultimately to succeed to the business, together with a comfortable though by no means gigantic fortune. At the end of his schooling in 1809, Keats was, at the instance of his guardian, apprenticed to a surgeon, with whom he served for three years till, after a probation not unproductive of imperfect sympathies, he separated from him in 1812. However, he continued his medical and surgical studies in London to such purpose that he ultimately received the license to practise, though by this time the interest in poetry, which it seems was in him rather late in development, had begun to be an overwhelming obsession. From 1815 onward he was a dedicated poet. He had, we know, written verse as early as three years before, but after 1815 hardly a line came from his pen which has not a burning or a poignant interest.

Even today it is with something like physical pain that we read the lines from "Sleep and Poetry":

> O for ten years, that I may overwhelm
> Myself in poesy—,

that is to say if we realize that that year was the first of the five allowed him by the fates.

In 1817 Keats's first volume of poetry was published and fell dead. But undiscouraged he began the composition of "Endymion," strangest and most misunderstood of poems, which only in our time after the lapse of a philistine century is beginning to be properly comprehended and admired. Into the year 1818 the unfortunate boy managed to crowd enough strangely varied experience to last most people a lifetime. What with family illnesses and death, the departure of his brother George for America, and the attacks on "Endymion," which was published in April, it was a terrible year for him. Nevertheless in the face of varied anxiety and depression he had finished "Isabella" in the Spring, begun the great "Hyperion" as the autumn ended, and by February, 1819 had composed the "Eve of St. Agnes," one of the greatest of English love-poems.

Never in so brief time was such huge creativeness. The year begun with the "Eve of Saint Agnes," saw the conception and completion of the "Ode to Psyche," "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," "The Ode to a Nightingale," "The Ode to Autumn," and the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," every one of them a great peak of poetry. As if that were not enough we have also "The Eve of St. Mark," which unhappily was never finished, and the five act drama "Otho the Great" which unhappily was. At all times during this creative year he was struggling with money difficulties, and his health was declining, becoming definitely alarming in December.

Keats died after great suffering on the 23rd of February, 1821, in the yellow house at the foot of the Spanish Stairs in Rome, and was buried by the Pyramid of Cestius, a relic of Roman funeral pomp which now serves as the monument of two English poets.

I propose here to make a brief appraisal, uncontaminated by detailed research, of some aspects of this strange, young, great poet, whose work grows stronger and more beautiful as time lengthens. In doing so I shall consider first of all his limitations which are trifling and nugatory, before touching on virtues which defeat estimation. It seems to me proper to say at once that Keats was not highly cultivated in the sense that Wordsworth and Shelley were cultivated, and that his extraordinary congenital power to discriminate values literary and psychological was not always sufficient to save him from outrageous lapses into bathos and bad taste. It is true that he had managed to read deeply among the Elizabethans. But he had only a schoolboy's Latin and just enough French to translate a poem by Ronsard or to become jealous when Fanny Brawne conversed in that tongue. Of Italian he possessed a mere smattering. And we should perhaps thank God that he knew no Greek, for we should never have had "On First Looking Into Chapman's

(*Continued on next page*)

Thar's Still Gold in Them Thar Hills

THE COMING AMERICAN BOOM. By L. L. B. Angas. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1934. $1.50.

Reviewed by JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

INFLATION in America, says Major Angas, who has a fairly enviable record as a prophet, has just begun. And because the Roosevelt administration is bound, as he sees it, to keep on pouring more and more money into emergency expenditure, creating thereby a "redundancy" of cash in the pockets and the passbooks of the people, and enlarging the basis for credit as the government borrows at the banks, there should be, must be, a boom in common stocks.

"At a guess," says Major Angas, "I should say such a rise will begin before the end of the Summer of 1934." By projecting his graphs into the future, on a basis of plotting the coming behavior of short and long term market swings from what has happened in recent cyclical phenomena, Major Angas, who believes that history repeats itself on the Stock Exchange, concludes that common stocks may reach their 1929 levels around 1938. He is not yet "in person" forecasting such a rise, but he notes, apparently with satisfaction, that the credit facilities made available by devalution of the dollar, the silver purchase plan, and other inflationary measures, exist to support it.

Most persons who saw their margins melt away in 1929 will, upon reading such a statement, cry "God help us" and rush to buy subsistence farms. For if the Dow Jones share index (Major Angas's economic bible) rises to 1929 heights once more, it will most certainly fall again to 1931 depths. Major Angas, who thinks that Roosevelt will "stabilize" after reflation, loses a little of his broker's hard-headedness when he mentions the word "stabilization." As the phrase goes, he hasn't thought this stabilization matter through. Assuming that a stable price level might be achieved, it would most certainly lead to a new variety of social harm, as I think

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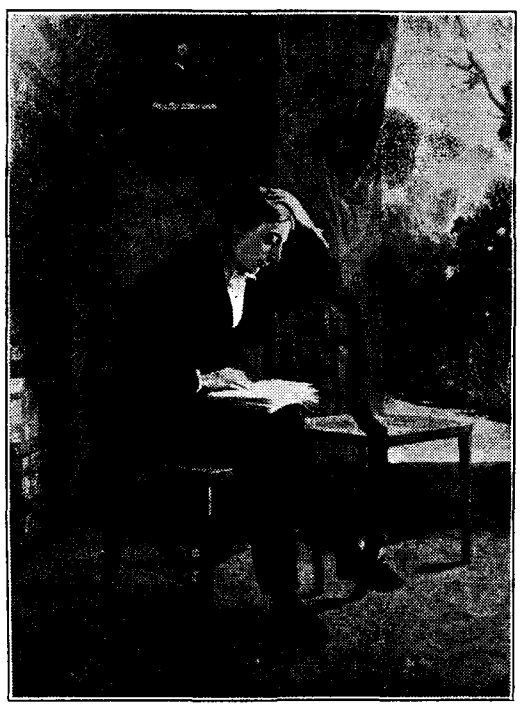
A Steadfast Poet

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Homer" from a man who could drink from the genuine spring. A perfect familiarity with ancient literature might, indeed, have prevented his novel and lovely development of the myths that enchanted him.

In that sense his lack of high training was not a disadvantage. But it was a handicap and it might have been increasingly so. Nor would he have been the worse for a sort of culture that the school at Enfield, which he attended in his youth, for all its encouragement of him did not or could not give. Whatever is exuberantly and unnecessarily tasteless in his verse may be confidently attributed to a sort of ignorance which was caned out of Byron and Shelley, an ignorance by no means an essential concomitant of genius, an ignorance which Shakespeare himself felt and complained of in the sad moment when we find him desiring this man's art and that man's scope. When Endymion utters the exc



SEVERN'S PORTRAIT OF KEATS

Those lips y blisses,
or pleads f
One si breath—one gentle
squ

the fe stupid injustice of Lockhart becomes almost explicable apart from their political hatred

men of talent and training too often feel for errors which their good fortune has prevented them from committing. This was uncharitable and unintelligent. But it became practically imbecile in this instance when, hatefully preoccupied with the mole on her thigh, they succeeded in ignoring naked Aphrodite.

The sort of ignorance to which I allude is a small matter perhaps, a mere mote between us and starshine. But it seems worth mentioning, if only for the reason that, in five brief years, the discipline of fate and the subtle influence of a great and beautiful mind upon itself had enabled him to transcend the limitation. The loftiest sense of what his calling demanded, careful reading, and meditation more careful still, had unshackled him from the cheap, sentimental, and diluted Rousseauism that passed for liberality, had made him free of nature, had in short brought him into contact with superb inner realities. His brief probation was enough to teach him to see through the artificialities of Leigh Hunt, who published Keats's first verses in his paper, *The Examiner,* to sharpen his sight, to purge his style, and finally to find his way to immortal inevitabilities, not attained as the result of any discipline that men of culture can impose.

When Matthew Arnold wrote the gentlest, most penetrating, and least patronizing of his essays, he felt it necessary to emphasize the manliness, the vigor, the energy of Keats. His essay was clear wind that for ever dissipated the miasma of the *Quarterly* and *Blackwood's.* But I wish he had dwelt more on a point which has been made before (by Colvin, for instance) and will be made again. Keats is the most inward of poets, more like Blake than he is like Shelley, more like Vaughan than he is like Tennyson. They are dangerous men, those inward poets, and in their verses there is stranger fire than we are always prepared for. Nature comes into them and they participate mystically with her, but her images are only the colors with which they paint inner landscapes. More than any modern poet, more than they who most profess to pursue the same objects, Keats takes us into the bride-chambers and birth-chambers of the spirit, and has by magic we cannot pretend to anatomize, brought outward to our sight the inmost glory of the interior passion. His real life was there, beautiful, liberated life. And of this he appears to have been perfectly conscious. In a letter to his brother and sister-in-law he writes: "You speak of Lord Byron to me. There is this great difference between us: he describes what he sees—I describe what I imagine. Mine is the hardest task." Beyond all doubt it was. And also, beyond all doubt he was the man of all men since Shakespeare, not excluding Donne, not excluding Crashaw, best qualified to perform it.

This point made, or rather stated, a little space may be devoted to what seems to me the proper way of looking at Keats's performance. Three slender volumes published in his lifetime include the greater part of his great work. Opinions with respect to poetry differ not only between man and man but between time and time. Both these differences have been explored competently by the scholars after whom we are gleaning. But it is interesting to note or to combat some of the views which different men have expressed at different times. Charles Lamb thought the pathetic tale of "Isabella" the very top

ground that the famous odes and the famous sonnets are perfect, that "Endymion" is a failure and "Hyperion" is not a success. With respect to that judgment on the two long poems, it is my belief that any poet would give ten years of his life to write a work whose success was no more mitigated than "Hyperion's," whose failure was no more obvious than "Endymion's." For some reason the latter poem has been a special target, so faithful and delightful a champion as Sir Sidney Colvin complaining of a certain vulgarity in the love passages. And there is a disposition to regard this work as merely the lush exuberance of unregulated genius. I am terribly mistaken if this be the case. If "Endymion" is merely the revamping of a pretty myth and nothing more, then Lockhart and Wilson are justified in their Caledonian graves. But I will never admit it. Keats, in his own phrase, has, "like the spider spun from his own inwards his own airy citadel." If the poem is anything at all, it is a superb and embracing view of the structure of the spirit, those parts that are known as it were by sight, those parts which can be inferred as it were by thought. An honest reader must see that it is "full of symbols for his spiritual eye, of softness for his spiritual touch, of space for his wandering, of distinctness for his luxury." As far as I am concerned there is no question but that he conceived of the poem in this way, as opening up and elucidating terra incognita lying in the souls of all men. It is not just prolegomena to first love. It is exploration of wide continents and sounding of great deeps. Anybody who reads it with his eyes open and his own life and experience in view, rather than a set of opinions on the Romantics, must see in the poem something apart from, and Himalayas higher than, any mere outrush of unregulated genius.

All times have their limitations. It would be interesting to know ours, but that is a privilege reserved for those who for purposes we cannot imagine shall explore our not too glorious dust. Even with this in mind it is hard for us to understand the manœuvres of better men than ourselves before the splendor of "Endymion." Poetry, naked and superb, was before them, but the mote of anti-revolutionary prejudice and the beam of a middle-class, semi-respectable, and definitely second-rate moral system were too much for eyes that otherwise would have perceived more than our own limited vision. It taxes the mind to comprehend why in poetry so beautiful and intuitively penetrating, the gross, obvious, and unimportant imperfections did not almost become a grace in the sight of the critics who after all were intelligent men.

The "Lamia" volume, last of the works published in Keats's lifetime, can only be paragoned for brevity and magnitude with the Sonnets of Shakespeare, Milton's volume of 1645, and the "Lyrical Ballads." The mere title-page is a bede-roll of beauty, "Lamia," "Isabella," "The Eve of St. Agnes," "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode to Psyche," "Fancy," "Bards of Passion and of Mirth," "Souls of Poets dead and gone," "Robin Hood," "To Autumn," "Ode on Melancholy," and—"Hyperion." Just to read that list is breath-taking. To borrow an old figure, if the volume, after some historic cataclysm were the sole survivor of all our poetry the archeologist who should preside over its resurrection, could imagine, and might perhaps exaggerate, the beauty of the lost literature, as our scholars shadow forth the greatness of the Tenth Muse from the fragment of a love song. Everything men desire and demand of poetry is in the book, poignant feeling, incredible felicity of expression, penetration of thought. There is mystery and clearness, the development of the high and beautiful, of the simple and the touching, the line exquisite for naked grace or delicious adornment. Everywhere there is the implication and suggestion of what no mere word can carry, the drawing up from the reader's own interior depth of those vast images that lie like sea-mon-

to all men, by melody and imagery, all the elements of desire and the shadows of ancient thought renew their beauty as the python renews his gleaming armor.

A word should be said on the letters of Keats. They tell the brief and troubling story of his life better than any of his biographers. There is perhaps no body of correspondence of equal magnitude of such strange interest. They alone would have secured him a permanent place in the history of the literature. Certainly no man of his years has spoken with greater charm or greater wisdom. Fragments of the letters have become part of the language precisely as the shining phrases from his poems have done. They admit you, they welcome you, into the innermost intimacies of a beautiful mind. In them the dream of a boy is expressed by a full and powerful intellect, which operates swiftly and exactly. There is hardly a subject of interest to man that is not elucidated by a clear and piercing light which reveals facets of things unknown or ignored, so that a topic thrashed to jejune threadbareness comes to us with a shock of novelty. You are captivated by the sheer delightfulness of the man, by humor, by a kind of divine sharpness of the mind, by a virtue at once jovial and mercurial. There is seriousness and good sense. There is gentleness and kindness and friendliness and a complete independence of intellect. He sees things at once with a child's interest and a man's judgment. Whether he is talking of a gay party at Haydon's, a conversation with Coleridge, a scene behind stage at a burlesque, of what Shelley ought to do in his new venture, or of the stage of poetic development of the mind of Wordsworth when he was writing "Tintern Abbey," the fascination never fails. Nor can I agree with two of the great Victorians that those terrible letters to and about Fanny Brawne exhibit a falling off and that they ought never to have been published. Doubtless they did violate in some way the Platonic ideal of Keats, which had been produced as a result of the passionate sympathies risen up against the brutality of *Blackwood's.* But I for one will never deprecate the very essence of humanness. Those letters make dreadful reading, but a man's soul must be stiff with preternatural pomp, who feels that they reveal a loss of spiritual dignity. Unconventional things have a way of getting said in the hour of death and in the day of judgment. It seems to me that he put down nothing to which exception can be taken. Nor do I feel that the strictures passed on these final and tragic documents by the pet cat of Watts-Dunton, No. 2, The Pines, Putney, do much to entertain or anything to edify. They must be forgiven as the eccentricities of a great man, prematurely coddled into his dotage, who retained his volubility after the natural force, that in three blazing sonnets had repelled the cheap blasphemy of Carlyle, was sadly and permanently abated.

It is satisfactory in closing to take refuge in the comfortable thought that it is impossible to say anything adequate, new or old, about Keats, that is not banal. Pyramid and Parthenon are not subject to the indignity of praise or to the ineptitude of blame. Though the superlatives rush to the nib of the pen, the immense and beautiful fact remains untouched, undefined. This man was poetry, and we cannot and do not pretend to fathom the mystery of the incarnation. In his brief apogee a power was disclosed, an evanescent beauty in some way became eternal. Thankful we may be, but the fact remains inexplicable as the pulsations in the substance of a sun or the rhythms that are parcel of an atom. Something sidereal came into life with that poetry, something that after more than a hundred years, full, it is true, of not ignoble thought but full also of crass and terrible collective agony, we have been unable to lose, for all our contemporary declensions into the unhousebroke and the coarse. To paraphrase the verdict of a better judge, it is not necessary to think with too much bitterness on the tragedy of an unhappy and defeated young man. He has proved

By LAURA BENÉT

"A KEY!" said she in surprise—
There, dangling from his wrist
Was a delicate thing, the size
Of a fairy's fist.
"May it show me the heart of my child,
Aloof and wild."

She had waited until he slept,
Wan, wistful-eyed.
On slippered feet she had crept
Through darkening rooms to his side.
Yes, over the heart's pulsing clock
Was a tiny lock.

It swung open, the heart of her son.
What saw she? High, wilding grass;
A colt tossing its head to run
Through a rocky pass.
Voices cried, "Mother, come no more
To this secret door!"
Voices said, "Have no fear—it is free
From aught save liberty."

Though the mother, closing it fast
Withdrew, strange fires in her brain,
She tried the key at long last
Again and again,
When she thought her son short-spoken
Or brooded on promises broken.

The little key, rusting in air,
Fitted ill the lock,
Every time she forced it there
Gave a shuddering shock.
A fragile instrument bent
By prying intent.

There came a night when the key
Would not fit at all.
When her son in an ecstasy,
Turned his face to the wall.
As his heart, quickening its pace,
Withdrew to a safer place.

Oh the distance stretched between
His vision, beauteous
As Vega or Sirius,
And her in the known valley
With its sweet encloséd dream
Now transcended wholly!

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Rude Folk in a Mountain World

THE HILLS STEP LIGHTLY. By Alberta Pierson Hannum. New York: William Morrow & Company. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THERE are certain books which we read with pleasure but with no great excitement, and there are others which we read with excitement but with dubious pleasure. Yet many of those which quickened momentary pulses have died in the memory, while a few of the less precipitate ones have so mellowed in memory that they have taken on a quiet but determined life of their own. Mrs. Hannum's first novel, "Thursday April," is one of those whose vitality seems greater today than when it was printed two years ago. Its curious combination of ordinariness and fantasy, of ease and intensity, is emphasized by her new story.

In some ways "The Hills Step Lightly" recalls one of the finest first novels ever printed in America, Elizabeth Madox Roberts's "The Time of Man." If Mrs. Hannum's work is less suggestive and symbolic than Miss Roberts's, it is more direct; though it is neither as rich nor as dramatic, it has something of the same conviction. It, too, moves in a world of poor mountain-folk whose labors are as drab as their locutions are rich, a world of gnarled realities set to rude poetry.

The story could not be simpler. It centers about Deborah Deane and never leaves the acres in western North Carolina which she tends. At the beginning of the tale she is a girl of ten; in the last chapter she is an old woman of seventy-five. Two men govern her life: the man for whom she bears a child at the request of his childless wife and whom she subsequently marries, an upright, hard-working, and happy-hearted farmer; and an unquiet fiddler and shoemaker who, puckishly, walks in and out of her life, and whom she buries in the end. The sixty-five years covered in the story might have been spread upon a panoramic canvas; instead, Mrs. Hannum has chosen to paint her heroine in a series of selective panels. Without stressing the native backgrounds she has brought out local color with extraordinary skill and subtlety. The hunting episodes, the tall tales, the legends of witchcraft, are so intricately woven that it is hard to separate the central story from its clustering episodes. The reader moves among these people with immediate intimacy. He is at home, incongruously enough, in the primitive interiors; every stick of farmhouse furniture has a meaning for him; every casual sight and sound is characterized without being theatricalized. Everything is authentic, even the lesser smells of herbs dangling from wooden pegs in the rafters, "dried catnip and boneset, pennyroyal and masterroot, smoke that crept up the back wall of the hearth and escaped out into the room from the freshly poked supper fire."

The story itself is so calmly told that its quality is likely to be overlooked. The prose is poetic throughout without straining for poeticisms; a quaint humor often slips into the midst of moments of tension. Deborah, for example, justifies the coming of love to her lover.

"Thar's nothin' wrong about hit, Jilson. We couldn't he'p hit, and hit's beautiful."

Jilson smiled ruefully. "Mebbe we couldn't he'p hits comin' to us, Deborah, but we don't need to set hit a chair."

This is a book about which too little may be written or too much may be said. It is not a sentimental nor a novel story. But it is a warm and moving one.

In the Byrne Vein

THE LAUGHING JOURNEY. By Thomas Lennon. New York: The John Day Company. 1934. $2.

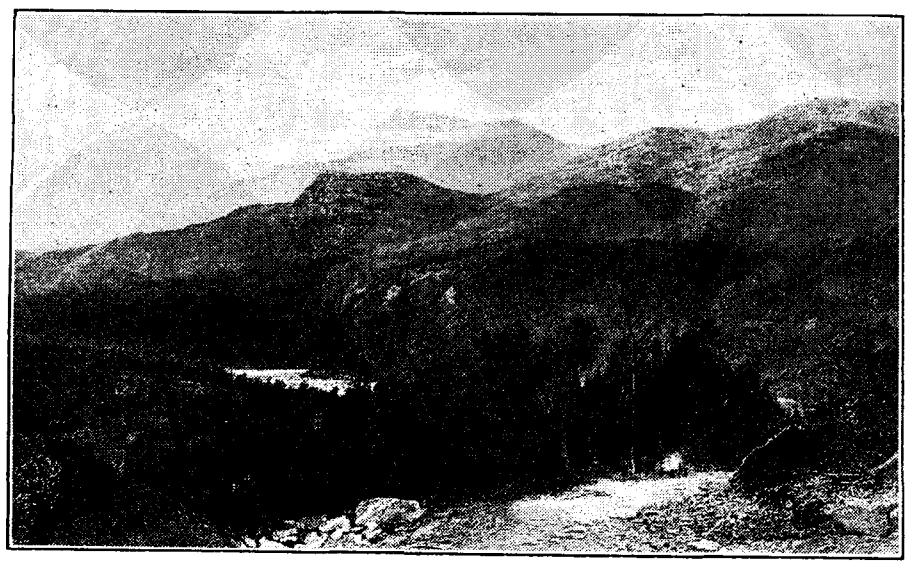
Reviewed by ROBERT B. MACDOUGALL

THE rhythms and cadences of Anglo-Irish prose are unmistakable. Whether they have been forced in a literary hothouse is beside the point. Donn Byrne had them, and now Thomas Lennon puts them into his first novel, a gay, tragic fantasy of Ireland and the Irish. Readers who are gratified and enlivened by the Celtic temperament as represented in the Byrne tradition will find this story of Shane Erskine's rebellion a thing of joy. Others may not like it so well, feeling that this tradition is hardly nearer the truth than was the old-style "begorra" stage Irishman. But truth or no, this journey of laughter is seductive; it has sentiment, warmth, bravery. It will have no traffic with the small or the mean, and its philosophy can take a firing squad in its stride.

Shane Erskine's rebellion, which came to nothing though it caused the death of many well intentioned Irishmen, might have taken place in almost any decade of the late nineteenth century. The question of actuality is unimportant. At any rate, Shane Erskine's father was Shane Conor, a fireman in San Francisco, who had never seen the lad until the rebellion had failed and the son was near the end of his days. The girl, Rosaleen Fair, had met Shane Erskine twice, however, before she sailed for the United States, and neither one of them had ever forgotten the other. She, too, returned to Dublin only when the mischief was almost completed and Shane Erskine was running from the English soldiers. But Shane Conor, and Rosaleen Fair, and the Lord Abbot, head of the monastery where Shane Erskine had once gained sanctuary, were with him at the end, as was fitting. The conclusion of the story is genuine tragedy.

It must not be thought that "The Laughing Journey" is a sad or doleful book. It is far from that. All the way through, there is humor, some of it broad and quick, some of it—like the two discussions between Shane Erskine and the Lord Abbot, or the expedition along the road to Belfast—in sustained passages where the comic spirit deepens and becomes memorable.

The story is not a masterpiece; no critical microscope is needed to find flaws. But in Mr. Lennon's writing there is so much zest and buoyancy, so much mad courage and sober wisdom, that we have only affection and admiration for what he has done.



THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS
From a painting by Homer Martin

The Two Catherines

(Continued from first page)

dalized her mother and her matriarchal grandmother by insisting on going to her father's office to help him in the business, and on his deathbed he called her his son and told her to take his place. So Catherine, in the third quarter of the last century, when marriage was the only career for a nice girl, took hold of Hanson's tottering cigar business. Thereafter, for twenty years, Hanson's was one-half—and a perfectly distinct half—of her life. The other half was given, in the early years, to a fascinating young artist husband, Richard Temple, for sake of whose *beaux yeux* Catherine had declined a faithful adorer and most desirable match. It was this clean-cut division of her life into halves — by day the keen, alert woman of business, by night the ardent wife of a passionate lover— that made tragedy for Catherine, and that forms the main theme and the essential merit of Miss Leslie's story. The very qualities that made Catherine successful in business—her possessiveness, her instinct to bend people to her will, her reservation of one-half of herself—made her unsuccessful first as wife and later as mother. Sensual Maria, for whom Richard left Catherine, told her many years later: "He wanted you as wife, and you made yourself his mistress. He could have had *them* two-a-penny. Richard was half-woman. And you—half-man, for all the little lady that you were!"

FROM THE JACKET DESIGN OF "FULL FLAVOUR"

This almost Freudian motif Miss Leslie handles with consistent skill and delicacy. It is at once the foundation on which her principal character is built and the thread that binds the diverse persons and incidents of her story into a unity. As a result, through all its long course the book holds together and commands interest. In addition, one must admire the author's skilful characterization, especially of the women of her story (the men are not always so distinct), and the careful workmanship with which she has built her successive scenes and reproduced the atmosphere of the period.

I believe this is only the second book of Miss Leslie's to be published in America, the first having appeared some years ago. It is an auspicious introduction, a distinctive achievement in the over-crowded field of the family novel.

Robust Romance

CAPTAIN NICHOLAS. By Hugh Walpole. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1934. $2.50.

MR. WALPOLE is exercised about the morals of the younger generation, and still more about the cynical attitude it takes towards its own failings and those of the world in general. So he has written a romantic novel to show that right is still right and wrong is still wrong, that God's in His heaven and all's right with the world, that virtue will still triumph, if it is given half a chance, in spite of all that the cynics may say.

As the vehicle with which to convey this robust optimism, Mr. Walpole selects a middle-class English family in which a miscellaneous assortment of relatives—husband, wife, and mother-in-law, uncle and aunt and three children—like little birds in their nest agree. The ménage is more than Victorian; it is patriarchal. Into this pleasant Utopia stalks the sinister figure of the wicked uncle, Captain Nicholas, holding by the hand his female offspring, a pathetic but most sophisticated little girl called Lizzie, and announcing that he has come to stay.

What Captain Nicholas does to that happy family is limited only by Mr. Walpole's imagination, which is fertile. For the gallant captain is a rogue, if ever there was one, the charmingly genial and handsome black sheep of the family well and favorably known to generations of novel readers. It is not only that Captain Nicholas is a first-class crook, a thief, and a card-sharp; he is also a malignant, Mephistophelian person who hates to see his family so smug and happy and cannot rest content till he has set them all by the ears. He worms an innocent but embarrassing secret out of the maiden aunt; he gets the daughter to confide in him her love affair with a married poet; he introduces the son to wild women. Worst of all, he gets hold of a most compromising letter written by staid, stuffy old Charles, the husband and father, and sees that it gets to the eyes of his wife, poor, old-fashioned, trusting, rather incoherent Fanny. Nevertheless, as has been hinted, virtue triumphs in the end, and the reader will be mildly entertained in discovering how that desirable consummation is brought about.

An Amazing Puppet

BIG STEEL. By Leslie Swabacker. New York: The Macaulay Co. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALVAH C. BESSIE

MR. SWABACKER'S story of the rise of one of the [illegible] compounde[illegible] garbled history, and [illegible] vides excellent entertain[illegible] much technical information here, for those seeking it, on the various processes of steel manufacture, many tantalizing glimpses into the private lives of half-a-dozen semi-fictional personages of the past century. "Big Steel" himself, magnate who rises from bug-infested boarding-houses to a mansion on Riverside Drive that was "a perfect reproduction of a famous French chatoo," has a half dozen more or less recognizable ancestors, a handful of genuinely human traits, and a surplusage of the superman. Beginning life as butcher boy and steel puddler, he rose through the sheer force of his superhuman energy and fanatical devotion to steel, to a position of power that rivalled only that of the redoubtable finance capitalist, "G. Z. Barton," whose loans to the Allied Powers brought America into the World War. He is an amusing marionette, and what he has lost in humanity, in his passage through the considerably flawed crucible of Mr. Swabacker's fictional talents, he has made up in sensational activity.

A physical giant, his appetites were commensurate with his size, and they nearly brought him to ruin. Though he started life as a workman, he lost sympathy with his fellows when fate, in the form of a strike, left him captive in the hot sun, with bullets whizzing on all sides. He never forgave labor this insult, and thereafter he was as ruthless as "Henry Schlesinger," who founded the steel industry in America; but, Mr. Swabacker would have us believe, his ruthlessness was not compounded of the lusts for power and wealth, but of the practically religious emotions involved in his passion for steel as an abstraction, as a deity. Steel must be manufactured, no matter how many slaves perished in the process. The machinations of the magnate are traced in simplified detail that makes them understandable, if not quite human; but neither "Big Steel"—Daniel Kelly Caine—nor his associates, wife and daughter, his mistresses, ever come to life.

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The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.....*Editor*
NOBLE A. CATHCART.....*Publisher*
AMY LOVEMAN.....*Associate Editor*
GEORGE STEVENS....*Managing Editor*
WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT, CHRISTOPHER MORLEY } *Contributing Editors*

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Vaulting Ambition and the Writer

It is very strange to what tasks able writers will devote themselves when, to the reader with a certain detachment of view, they seem to be neglecting the special work for which their talent is most eminently suited. One thinks of Coleridge—though it is also true that he was discouraged somewhat by the unspeakable Scotch reviewers—giving, as he himself tells us, "twenty years incessant thought and at least ten years positive labor to the one in six volumes Logosophia, or on the Logos in man and Deity, forming a compleat and perfectly original system of Logic, Natural Philosophy, and Theology." How well posterity might have spared that mountainous accumulation if Coleridge could only have concluded "Christabel!" How easily the best minds are led astray as to what constitutes a work worthy of their talents. Coleridge undoubtedly fancied himself as a great philosopher, whereas he was actually possessed of a certain unique vein in poetry that he hardly explored. He wasted much of his time in verse writing formal and inflated odes. Even in that medium itself he but rarely found his own particular Pierian spring; though he messed around a good deal in turbid waters.

We mistrust most greatly ambitious schemes of writing. They are usually projected by those who have either not discovered where their own particular talents may lie or by those so obtuse to the reason for good writing that they confuse hugely ambitious essay with probable artistic stature. To this, as to all generalizations, there are plenty of exceptions. But the amount of dulness in print would be considerably reduced if ambition in writers did not so often blind them to their own place in the general scheme. You may be just the boy or girl to attempt a trilogy or an epic; but the odds are that the world will remember you for the creation of a single character or for a quatrain.

This may all seem very discouraging and depressing to youth. But we are not exactly talking to youth. It is the prerogative of youth to go "all out" for the great attempt, and we shouldn't have much respect for youth in any of the arts that didn't do so. But the time must come when, after a good deal of experimentation, one particular "line" suggests itself as that along which the natural abilities of a particular mind function most freshly and freely. Then is the time, at least for a while, to cleave to that line and thoroughly explore the possibilities of a certain kind of writing. We do not mean that a writer should confine himself to so narrow a field that he will end merely by repeating himself, however charmingly (as more than a few have done!), but his growth will be more natural from the perhaps less ambitious to the more ambitious if, through his earlier work, he strives to find that province most fundamentally his.

There are many sad spectacles in the history of literature, and one most certainly is that of the man whose mind may have been so brilliantly versatile as to preclude his ever really "finding himself." In this quarter and in that he has sparkled and gone. He has flung himself wholeheartedly into various enterprises. Probably he has eventually been most beguiled by the work for which he was not nearly so well fitted as for a comparatively neglected medium. "Your best friends can't tell you," because they don't know. And friends may be a writer's worst enemies. They admire that in his work which is most germane to their own thought, without any reference to his natural abilities. They would rather he did this or that to please them than develop along his own peculiar line. So would a good many editors and publishers. It is old news that through the success of some one book a writer has been chained to his second-best for life, if he was trying to make a living by writing.

Only the author himself can really get to know himself and the claim he should stake in the land of literature. Writing is the most subtle and complicated test of any man's intellectual honesty. The unwritten word is not. We talk greatly at random, and our foolish remarks, our half-truths, our positive perversions of the truth for the sake of argument or jocularity, are not often remembered against us. Wits get off easiest, provided their remarks surprise a laugh. But you cannot possibly write as you would like to write unless you are as honest as possible with yourself. What you put down must represent your truest convictions at the time, or it has no chance to live. That is precisely why so much writing dies an early death. The truth is not in it. It may seem glittering at the time, but the glitter tarnishes all too easily. Honesty, as near as may be, is then the first touchstone for a writer trying to find himself; and beyond that it would not seem so hard for him to find the field in which he works most gladly. If you do not enjoy your work your readers are not going to enjoy it. It it easy for us to know that we prefer, say, carrots to onions, or, say, tennis to golf. And yet many a writer who would have been a more than fair lyrical poet has elected to be a volume-after-volume realistic novelist; and many a poet would have done a deal better in the field of the novel. Those are extreme instances, but there are thousands less extreme.

One may say that there are a great many people who would have made as good doctors or lawyers as writers. That also is true; but that is not precisely what we are discussing. Writing is less and less a profession apart. What we have been advising is that if one wishes to be a writer it would be as well to study carefully one's particular qualifications in respect to one's ambition. Experiment will probably be necessary; but if eventually one fishes up one's own murex, let it be recognized and let it dictate a course of action consonant with the conditions of its discovery.

The Saturday Review recommends

This Group of Current Books:

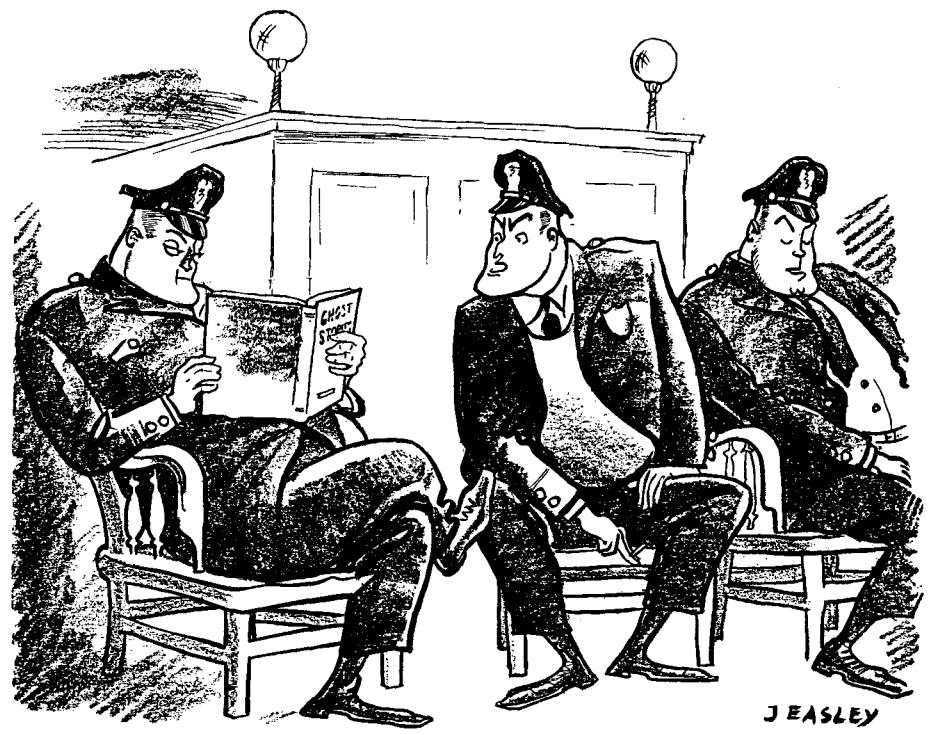
PEGASUS PULLS A HACK. By BERTON BRALEY. *Minton, Balch.* Entertaining reminiscences of a poet of the many.

LIGHTSHIP. By ARCHIE BINNS. *Reynal & Hitchcock.* A striking story of the lightship on her station.

THE COMING AMERICAN BOOM. By L. L. B. ANGAS. *Simon & Schuster.* The pronouncement of an English economist which has hurried Wall Street to the bookshops.

This Less Recent Book:

THEY STOOPED TO FOLLY. By ELLEN GLASGOW. *Doubleday, Doran.* A comedy of morals.



"I NEVER READ GHOST STORIES—THEY SEND A CHILL UP MY BACK!"

To the Editor: *Leadership and the Critics*

From Sir Hubert

SIR:—Your comment on newspaper critics is that sort of left-handed defense generally accorded a culprit whose lawyer has to be appointed by the court; what it says about the faults and merits of critics can be applied to any age; it does not get at the root of things.

In common with other reviewers I have listened to those who want a New Deal in reviewing, and found them to be a minor edition of those who seek a New Deal in government. They are, first, those who admire the older and more conservative writers, and second, those who militantly espouse the cause of the new radicals. There is also a middle group of readers who want a good, clean story, and who find reviewers inclined to patronize them.

Critics do not work in a void, but are the spokesmen of their time; they are at their best when they champion a new point of view which is gaining ground. They are least effective in a period of confusion, when the sands of one era are running out and the dominating issue of another is not yet clear.

We are now in a period when no one critic is the dominating spokesman for a new issue in writing. From 1910 on the fight against the Puritan, the academic attitude, and the parlor novel was a jolly battle, but it was won by 1926, when the younger writers, described in "Exile's Return," wanted something more than mere opposition to standards. The results of that movement are summed up by Carl van Doren in his epilogue to "Modern American Prose," but it is no longer exciting to be told that Dreiser, Cabell, Lewis, Robinson, and Mencken are great writers; they no longer stir our curiosity.

A new era in writing carries its own critics forward with it; only in rare instances is it foreseen and embraced by the older spokesmen, who usually account it an insult to their intelligence. At this time the most energetic movement in American writing comes from young radicals with precise political convictions—Marxists and communists. But their form is an extension of naturalism and the attempt of their critics to have a political aim recognized as a literary value is not welcome to the main body of American readers. The extent of their influence is discernible in the response of the more conservative writers; most of them ignore it entirely, one or two critics resent it, and only a few report the activities of the radical group with a degree of fairness.

It stands to reason that the radical point of view in literature will prevail only if its writers and critics build a sympathetic audience for it. At the moment this audience is very small, and the regular readers are unsympathetic to its point of view. Moreover, I doubt that we may look for leadership to the critics who think of politics first and writing second, save in the case of a widespread political upheaval, in which event traditional writing will be eclipsed for a time. The only alternative, then, is a retreat from the extreme naturalistic position, toward more solid portraiture, deeper character study, and possibly also, sad to say, to more comforting and less alarming stories. This, I believe, has already been sounded, and like all retreats, brings about considerable confusion; the foot soldiers are tangled up in the camp kitchens; some people are crying "Sauve qui peut!" and others, espying the critics, cry out: "À la Lanterne!"

HARRY HANSEN.

New York City.

Take Heart, Mr. Johnson

SIR:—I should like just a few lines in the *Review* to answer Pyke Johnson, Jr., who, being, as he says, a college freshman, needs perhaps a little friendly advice from one of his own generation. Having been away from academic halls for five years, my perspective of the world today may possibly be a trifle more mature than that of Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson, I have this to say. You speak of the world not even having vague promises to offer us. Silly boy! Do you not know that we must take the world by the neck and not wring promises from it but rather great results? How, you ask. By not being afraid to defy the conventional rules of the game of life. We of our generation will mould a new and braver world. We have much work ahead, and we have the brains and courage to do it.

In the lifetime of our generation great changes are due. Traditional morality, dogmatic religion, and polluted ethics of an outmoded social system will fall. And in their places will rise a new individual morality, a satisfactory code of ethics for such a new world and a better and more adjustable social system. The fetters of the centuries are about to drop. It is our job to tramp them under foot and then raise ourselves to new heights of living. . . .

So, take heart, dear Johnson. The best of life is still for us. It is a great business we have to attend. Let us be on our way!

FREDERICK H. KIMBALL.

Watertown, N. Y.

Covered Bridges

SIR:—I am a member of the staff of the Portsmouth Public Library and for some time have been making a collection of pictures of old covered bridges in New Hampshire and the other New England states. I am very much interested in the histories of these delightful old structures, which are fast disappearing, and would be very pleased to hear from any of your readers who know of any interesting details about them, most especially the dates that they were built and something about their builders.

I should be interested, too, in hearing of other bridges outside New England.

DOROTHY M. VAUGHAN.

Portsmouth, N. H.

Jefferson Manuscripts Wanted

SIR:—Now that I have corrected the last page proofs of my forthcoming biography of Dr. Benjamin Rush (1746-1813) to be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press about September 1, I have turned again to my study of Thomas Jefferson manuscripts. I am anxious to locate hitherto unpublished Jefferson letters and shall be pleased to hear from owners of such papers at 301 West School House Lane, Germantown, Philadelphia.

NATHAN G. GOODMAN.

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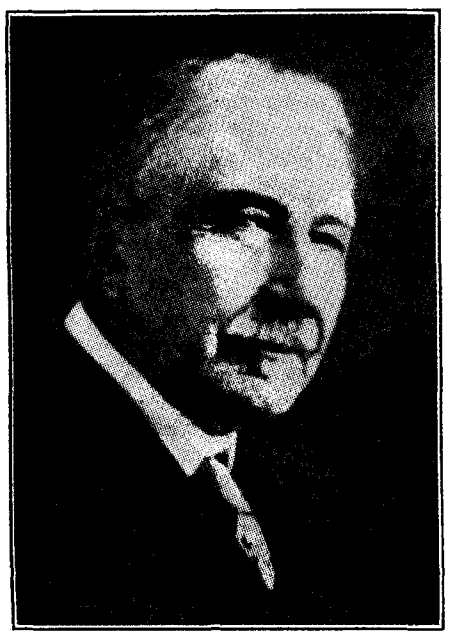
A Gentleman and a Scholar

REMINISCENCES OF AN AMERICAN SCHOLAR. By John W. Burgess. With a Foreword by Nicholas Murray Butler. New York: Columbia University Press. 1934. $3.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

IT is seldom that the autobiography of a scholar contains so much of interesting action and large affairs as this work of the late Ruggles Professor of Political Science in Columbia University. For Dr. Burgess was much more than a teacher and writer. He was a soldier in the Civil War, one of the principal builders of Columbia University, where he founded the Faculty of Political Science, an aggressive fighter in behalf of internationalism and peace, an active agent in connecting German culture with American,



JOHN W. BURGESS

and altogether a man with qualities of leadership and command. He was also a man of rich personality, a lover of music and the fine arts, and as this volume shows, deeply read in English letters. Had he lived to complete these simply but beautifully written reminiscences beyond 1898, where they virtually break off, and had he excluded from them his personal feeling on certain controversial topics (his stand on the war with Germany is well known), the result might well have been an addition to our best shelf of American autobiography. As it is, this literary torso tells a story that will be extremely interesting to all who are concerned in the development of American scholarship 1870-1900, and fascinating to all sons of Columbia, while it reveals a rare and powerful personality.

It is a story of singular unity. Sprung from a slaveholding but Unionist Whig family of middle Tennessee, young Burgess had been a student in Cumberland University when to avoid impressment into the Confederate forces he enlisted in Grant's army. On the night after a hard engagement with Confederate troops in January, 1863, he was placed as sentinel on the field.

To the eighteen-year-old boy it was the culminating nightmare of a series of agonizing experiences. Moved to the utmost, he resolved to do what he could to help abolish such carnage from the earth.

> I found myself murmuring: "Is it not possible for man, a being of reason, created in the image of God, to solve the problems of his existence by the power of reason and without recourse to the destructive means of physical violence?" And I then registered a vow that if a kind Providence would deliver me alive from the war, I would devote my life to teaching men how to live by reason and compromise instead of by bloodshed and destruction.

To this ambition his writings on politics, history, and constitutional law, the influence he still exerts through surviving students, and in great measure, the school of Political Science at Columbia, are a monument. He had caught his gleam as a mere lad, and he followed it to the end.

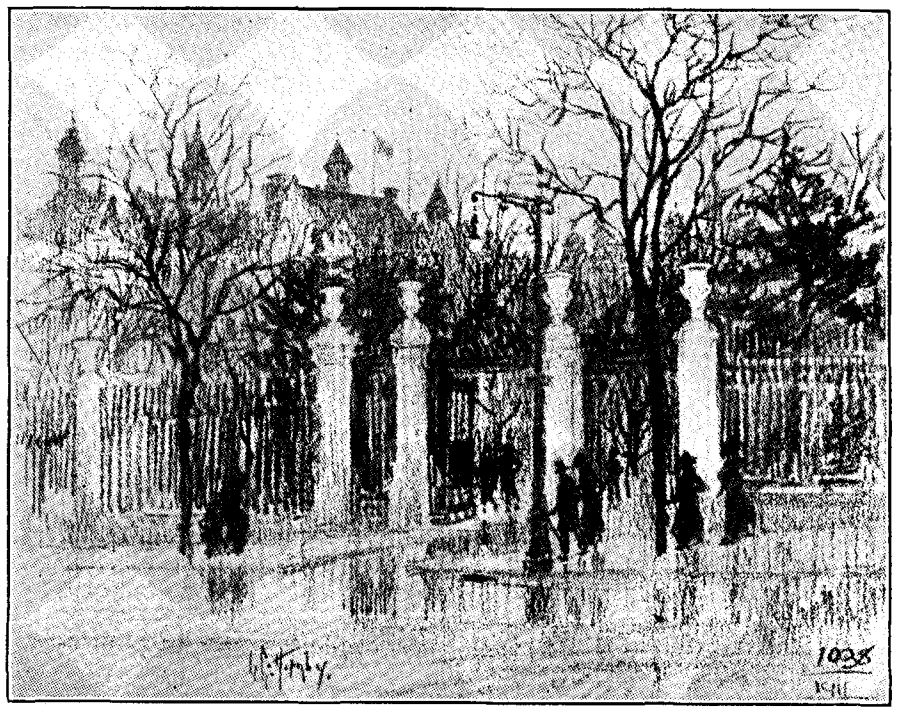
G. Stanley Hall's autobiography presents a glowing description of the revelation which German universities and culture of the seventies were to a youth from one of our own backward colleges. The same fervent enthusiasm lights up Dr. Burgess's pages on his eager years in Göttingen, Leipzig, and Berlin; years full of the delights of masterly teaching, intellectual talk, great bouts of reading, and study of art and music. His preliminary experience at Amherst College was more pleasant and fruitful than Hall's at Williams. In his animated picture of that institution 1864-67, he speaks well of several instructors, and gives high commendation to Julius H. Seelye, who made ethics and philosophy an inspiring mental discipline. Nevertheless, Germany *was* a revelation. It was like stepping from the austere rooms of a New England house into a European palace. At Göttingen he profited much from Lötze in philosophy, at Leipzig from Windscheid on civil law. The University of Berlin gave him more than either; he had the fortune to hear Curtius and Mommsen, of whom he gives brilliant vignettes. With the latter his friendship and correspondence endured until Mommsen's death, and he tells us that Mommsen told him in 1902 that he wished to see Britain, Germany, and America come together in the closest friendship, and predicted dire consequences if they fell into enmity. Droysen, the most prodigious worker the author ever met, taught him historical research and construction. Von Treitschke, then a young man, struck him as having more brilliance than judgment. Most of all he profited from Rudolf Von Gneist, the chief professor of public law and the adviser of Bismarck on all legal matters. This profound student of the English law and principal author of the German imperial codes threw open to Burgess the path which he followed in his own writings and teachings. Meanwhile, the young man was absorbing a knowledge of painting, sculpture, and opera, and at houses like that of the American minister, George Bancroft, was mingling in society.

Various writers have given us a picture of the low estate of Columbia College about the time when Dr. Burgess left his Amherst professorship to go thither in 1876. Brander Matthews, who had been a student there a few years earlier, has humorously described the inadequacy of the teaching. The unpublished letters of Hamilton Fish, head of the board of trustees, are full of despairing comments on the laziness of professors, the wretchedness of the equipment, the difficulty of making head against internal inertia and municipal indifference. Dr. Burgess writes that when he first looked about him at Columbia discouragement fell upon him with "iron grip."

No one did more than Dr. Burgess—indeed, no one before Dr. Butler did so much—to put energy and efficiency into Columbia. He vitalized the faculty meetings, he reformed the sorry little library, he awakened the interest of students, he brought new blood into the teaching staff. He made a study of the board of trustees, and found that three men, Hamilton Fish, Samuel B. Ruggles, and Stephen P. Nash, were chafing to move forward. Of these Fish was a great national figure, Ruggles a great local power. With them at his side, Burgess led the march which converted Columbia College into Columbia University, and a truly great university at that. At Amherst he had trained a small group of exceptionally able men, including George A. Plimpton, John Franklin Jameson, Frederic Gillett, Munroe Smith, Frederick W. Whitridge, and Richmond Mayo-Smith; and some of these he was able to call to his side in the work of remaking Columbia. Several of his early Columbia students, particularly William Barclay Parsons and Edwin R. A. Seligman, became equally valuable aids. (It was not until 1882 that Nicholas Murray Butler, whom he calls "in most respects the most brilliant student it was ever my fortune to instruct," graduated.) His first important victory was won in 1880. In April that year, when he had placed the academic situation before Ruggles in urgent terms, the latter exclaimed: "Well, we shall have to found a school for the political sciences separate from both the School of Arts and the School of Law." With that decision the university was really born. Dr. Burgess gives the whole story vividness and suspense, and brings the chief human actors in it vigorously before us.

There is a full-packed chapter on the early development of the School of Political Science, and another on Dr. Burgess's literary work. But with this, unfortunately, the volume breaks off incomplete. Some fragmentary additions give rather an unhappy effect to the close. One chapter is devoted to an acrimonious quarrel with certain citizens of Montpelier, Vt., over a bequest for a library, and is supplemented by some harsh pages on Montpelier's most eminent son, Admiral Dewey. Another chapter gives a too-extended account of the Roosevelt Chair at the University of Berlin which Dr. Burgess, very fitly, was the first to fill. Had he lived to complete the volume, these detached sections would have been knit into the general narrative with proper subordination to the whole. We should also have had a history of the growth of the School of Political Science under Dr. Burgess's deanship until his resignation in 1912, and some record of the teaching which he vigorously continued, under a growing administrative burden, until 1909. When on the eve of the World War he settled down to his nineteen years of quiet in Newport, he could well, reviewing the astonishing growth of Columbia University, say *quorum magna pars fui.*

But even the incomplete work is as valuable as it is interesting. Not even a fair start has yet been made toward writing the history of university education in America since 1865—as striking a part of our national record as any, and one of the most creditable of all. The most stirring part of that history will deal with the eminent innnovators of the first fifteen years after the Civil War, and must be written out of the records left by such men as Eliot, McCosh, James B. Angell, Andrew D. White, and Daniel Coit Gilman. To that group belonged Dr. Burgess, and to those records his book makes an important addition.



ONE OF THE GATES TO THE COLUMBIA CAMPUS

Gold in Them Thar Hills

(*Continued from first page*)

can be demonstrated. But we will let this pass for the moment, and take Major Angas for his tipster value. What has he to tell us for October, November, December?

There is no doubt that Major Angas can read the monetary, as distinct from the broader social, signs. If I had money to play with, I would take his advice and load up with thoroughly deflated "rubbish," with stocks that should benefit from the home loan program, and with luxury stocks, in the effort to beat the inflationary game. But I would blame no one, least of all Major Angas, if I didn't make a nickel.

The monetary and business signs that Major Angas counts on for an Autumn 1934 boom may be most misleading. Let us go back to the early Winter of 1928 by taking a look at Frederick Lewis Allen's "Only Yesterday." Unemployment in New York City was growing. Alexander Dana Noyes, financial editor of *The New York Times,* was describing the picture of current conditions presented by the mercantile agencies as one of "hesitation." The Harvard Economic Society, generalizing from its collection of statistics, remarked that "business is entering upon a period of temporary readjustment." Moody's Investors Service said that stock prices had "over-discounted anticipated progress." And then W. C. Durant, Arthur Cutten, and John J. Raskob, knowing that Ford production was bound to be delayed, and that the Radio Corporation represented a good speculative buy, commenced to purchase Radio and General Motors. The Big Bull Market was on, in spite of all the underlying portents of redu[illegible] diminishing purchasing po[illegible] eral "readjustment," whic[illegible] mism for the onset of a dep[illegible] Of course, the crash came a year later.

Well, Major Angas's Autumn, 1934, boom may come in 1935. But is now the time to buy? We still have 10,000,000 unemployed. Farmers whose acreage has been blighted by drought may not be in the market for automobiles. Labor troubles may prove insoluble for some time to come. The Japanese-Russian situation looks ominous. Hitler is going to have a hard winter. Taxation is going to swell. And the threat of further inflation, while it undoubtedly makes commodities look more solid than money, also has an unsettling effect on the very businesses whose common stocks are now selling at so-called premium rates. And, lastly, if we do have a boom, how quickly would we run through it? The 1933 summer boom was all too suddenly exhausted.

One thing that makes me doubt Major Angas's thoroughness as an economist is his apparent acceptance of Irving Fisher's notion that a stabilized price level is either possible or desirable. A stabilized price level would result both in a boom and in unemployment that would bring the boom crashing with a dull thud. Once stabilize the price level by monetary manipulation, and you will find that technological improvement, invoked to lessen the money spent in manufacture, will create a widening gap between production costs and sales prices. This means that more and more people will start borrowing to take advantage of the government-supported prices—and profits. And when too many people are borrowing and manufacturing and glutting the market, it means both runaway stocks and a crash.

So much for the hopes for stabilization. It looks as if the future would be shared by the more hard-boiled capitalist economists, who are willing to admit the inevitably dynamic nature of the profit system, and the Marxists, who think it is too infernally dynamic to last. Whether Major Angas's coming boom plays into the hands of one side or the other will depend on the nations' ability to keep the peace.

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The Final Word on Plato's Philosophy

THE ESSENCE OF PLATO'S PHILOSOPHY. By Constantin Ritter. Translated by Adam Alles. New York: The Dial Press. 1934. $3.50.

Reviewed by PAUL ELMER MORE

IT is a pleasure to endorse the notice of the publisher of a book: "Ritter's 'Kerngedanken der Platonischen Philosophie' represents the final word on the philosophy of Plato by one of the greatest of present-day scholars, who has long been associated with Platonic studies. In making this book available to American and English readers, Professor Alles has performed a welcome and memorable service." From the purely intellectualist point of view it is true, as the advertisement proceeds, quoting Professor A. E. Taylor, that Ritter has produced "the best . . . full-length study of Plato and his philosophy as a whole." The present work condenses, supplements, and on some minor points corrects Ritter's great two-volume manual, and is of the first importance for any one who desires to comprehend the immense achievement of Plato in the realm of rationalistic philosophy. But in making this avowal, as I do make it wholeheartedly, it is necessary to emphasize the attribute "rationalistic" and to identify "philosophy" practically with metaphysics. So taken, and so restricted, there is no more philosophical definition of the doctrine of ideas than his:

> I can conceive the Platonic Idea as the expression of the simple principle that every properly formed idea has a firm basis in objective reality. This doctrine followed almost of itself with logical necessity from the postulate which Plato took over from Socrates, to wit, that there must be an ineffaceable difference between good and bad, between true and false.

By the same standard one can applaud Ritter's treatment of the thesis that the criterion of truth is correspondence between a notion of the mind and objective reality. It is significant that perhaps the most thoroughly satisfactory of his chapters is that on Plato's Logic, in which he shows how far Plato had anticipated Aristotle in this field.

But, having granted so much, one cannot avoid the question whether this intellectualist attitude has not incapacitated Ritter from grasping a deeper significance of Plato's philosophy, whether his very merits do not exhibit in the highest degree that error of interpretation which springs from the attempt to approach Plato through the gateway of Kant and Hegel and has misled almost all the Teutonic commentators of the past century, and from Germany has dominated the English universities. (I say "almost," since there are a few notable exceptions, such as, *e.g.*, Von Stein, who, however, is scarcely read today and practically never quoted.) At least it is important to note that there is another way of reading Plato; and the difference between the two ways can be indicated by the fact that Ritter, having defined so admirably the theoretical validity of Ideas by the intellectual criterion of objective truth, deliberately slurs over the function of the imagination in confirming, or enforcing, their practical validity, and misses no occasion to depreciate the mythological arguments in Plato in comparison with the metaphysical and rationalistic. So he asserts his position categorically on page 122:

> If the hypothesis about the existence of immutable realities [*i.e.*, Ideas] is based on the more fundamental assumption of the incompatibility of an affirmation and a negation [the fundamental principle of syllogistic logic], it is so well grounded by merely referring the former hypothesis to the latter that a rational individual can no longer question it. Every other attempt which might be made to give it an objective basis is superfluous. A mythological basis taken from priests, priestesses, and wise men of old [Plato's appeal to the *palaios logos*] can have no greater value than the [other] mythological element in Plato's writings.

Quite naturally this difference comes to a head in Ritter's final chapter on Plato's Thoughts Concerning God. To the reader of metaphysical inclination, who arrives at the consummation of philosophy by the path of pure rationalism, Ritter's interpretation will be eminently satisfactory; to another sort of reader, who holds that the valuable elements of religion are not discovered by logic but are the growth of long experience from an initial instinctive perception or from some profound need of the soul, and are embodied in the form of myths rather than in the abstract absolutes of reason,—to such a reader these thoughts concerning God will not be Plato's voice at all (certainly not Plato's when he is expressing himself, so to speak, *in propria persona*), but echoes of Kant and other German "idealists" of the past century.

This charge of fundamental error in what may be called teutonized Platonism will not be accepted by all students—as witness the very author I am criticising. But that there are two distinct ways of approaching Plato, and that the distinction cuts to the heart of what we mean by Platonism, whichever way may be right and whichever wrong,—this is a fact and not a theory. To one critic the essential Plato will be the ontologist and epistemologist who speaks most convincingly in the sixth book of "The Republic" and in the group of dialogues just preceding the "Timæus." To another critic the deeper, enduring significance of Platonism will be found in the religious vein which, inspiring the early guesses of the "Euthyphro," passes through the poetry of the "Symposium" and the "Phædrus," and reaches its culmination in the grandiose legend of the "Timæus" and in the theological treatise of "Laws" X. The test, more succinctly put, is one's attitude towards the mythological framework of the "Timæus." Is this the point at which Plato's reason and imagination and inherited faith come together to form the summit of his philosophy, or is it a sign of declension into senility?

PLATO MEDITATING ON IMMORTALITY
From an ancient drawing

"Sir Roger Newdigate's annual Prize for English Verse," reports the *London Times*, "though it amounts only to the modest sum of twenty guineas, has aroused more interest, and been won by more distinguished men, than any other literary prize offered for competition either at Oxford or at any other university. Proofs of the importance attached to it include the fact that Hartley Coleridge took to drink because he had failed to win it. He competed for it in 1816, his subject being 'The Horses of Lysippus,' and was defeated by a poet who never, so far as is known, wrote poetry again but rose, instead, to a high position in the office of the Chief Secretary for Ireland—Sir Alexander Macdonnell.

"If all the Oxford poets who left the University without having won the Newdigate had sought the same relief our list of poetical dipsomaniacs would be a long one. Shelley did not win it, nor—to name only the dead—did Swinburne, or William Morris, or Lewis Morris, or Robert Bridges, or Andrew Lang, or Lionel Johnson, or Herbert Trench, or Ernest Dowson."

Rhymes for Bread

PEGASUS PULLS A HACK. By Berton Braley. New York: Minton, Balch & Company. 1934. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

BERTON BRALEY is fifty. But you wouldn't think it looking at him—or from this book. It is an extremely readable book, because it is full of the enthusiasm of youth. It is subtitled "Memoirs of a Modern Minstrel," is Braley's autobiography, and is packed full of anecdote. Braley has written verse about almost everything under the sun, and has been doing it for years. He has also written a lot of other things, got to know an extraordinary number of people, and has lived a variously eventful life that has never lost its zest for him. Quite a record.

He admits he is commercial, and what of it? He has enjoyed "trading rhymes for bread," thoroughly enjoyed it, and has welcomed the pressure upon his ingenuity to rhyme well and aptly upon any theme presented to him. He started as a journalist in Butte, Montana, and learned how to be a good one. He learned versification from Tom Hood's "Rhymester," and there I am thoroughly with him. I, too, regard that as a golden little book, having been introduced to it by my father at an early age. It is a sincere grief to me that my copy is now lost, strayed, or stolen. I had it for years. I learned a great deal from it. That, and Leigh Hunt's "Imagination and Fancy," and "Honey from Mount Hybla," are the best introductions to the craft of verse, and to some of the distinctions between verse and poetry.

Braley says some shrewd things about writing for money. Many good things have been written with money as the prime incentive. Good writing is hard work and no one does really hard work, I am inclined to believe, unless there is some pressure upon him. Usually that pressure is the need for money. Not the greed for money, but the actual necessity. There are bills to be paid, people to be supported, one's own three meals a day and the roof over one's head to be managed somehow. Then, also, there is the pressure of ambition; the intense desire to do some one thing a little better than most people can do it. I see nothing wrong with either incentive. Only I know that one cannot write day in and day out and as voluminously as has Braley, and have time to conserve the special energies which are necessary to write poetry as distinguished from verse. The writing of poetry demands more intense concentration than the business-man of verse has time to give to it. It involves a large part of one's life. Braley has been too much of an extrovert and too much of a business-man to become a poet. That is merely what I believe to be a statement of fact. He seems to be a very likable human being, a man who has lived a full life and had a grand time, a man essentially honest, an amusing raconteur, a "good guy," as they say, a fellow with a lot of horse-sense.

Before I forget it, he is a little careless about the spelling of names in his book. Thyra Samter Winslow is "Thrya." Charles Gilman Norris is "Charles D. Norris," Norman Bel Geddes is "Norman Bell Geddes," Shaemas O'Sheel is "Shamus O'Sheel." These mistakes ought to be corrected in another edition. Also, Robert Underwood Johnson is not "Johnston." But then there are so many writers, illustrators, editors, actors, *et al.* mentioned in the book that a few slips are perhaps excusable.

If you can't always trust Braley in regard to the spelling of people's names, you can trust him as to veracity concerning his own life. And I'm not going to tell you any of his anecdotes, either. They're good. But you'll have to buy the book.

A Modern Mystic

KEY WEST AND COLLECTED POEMS. By Hart Crane. New York: Horace Liveright. $3.

Reviewed by LOLA RIDGE

LIKE most men of creative power Hart Crane lacked the ability to invent; he could only discover. And as his chief prepossesion was with that ultimate reality that to each devoted searcher takes on a different form, he had to find the square root of his own vision. This vision, in which the theme was intrinsic, could not adjust itself to ready-made structures. Crane had to painfully evolve his own designs. His consciousness, as expressed in his poems, was fluid and receptive, yet always resuming its own form over the absorbed experience. As Waldo Frank early recognized he was a mystic. But because he was begotten and featured by an age deeply hostile to all mystic thought, his mysticism was not quickly discerned as such. Its outward contours were not incompatible with our thought trends. Moreover they recalled neither Blake's bright-figured kingdom nor Emerson's soft-haloed one. Hart Crane responded with primary emotion to the impact of immediate experience.

Like all men prone to ecstatic flights he was a yea-sayer to the cosmos and in this lies the secret of his response to Whitman's affirmative philosophy. Spiritually he was not of Whitman's kin. And though his will to the multitudes was the democratic one toward toleration, he did not, like Whitman, lustily love, nor, like Shelley, passionately pity them. His mysticism, as I feel it in "The Bridge," was a lonely thing, the result not of contemplation but of a concentration so intense it recalls the words of that mysterious medieval mystic who wrote, in "Cloud of the Unknowing," "nothing lives in the working mind but a naked intent stretching." Yet Crane, mystic of matter, bears his age with him on his flights. The visible world is never obscured or dropped as ballast that the form may soar. We hear its "nasal whine of power," the pulsing of its machinery. In "Cape Hatteras" all the paraphernalia of the steel age seems to be caught up as in a great wind and whirled "in oilrinsed circles of blind ecstasy!"

The three groups in these collected poems form a half arc that rises from the sea starward to sink to the sea again. The first group has a great deal of vitality, but the movement is small, uncertain of direction. It shows the lack of teamwork in a consciousness that does not yet know all its own units.

Hart Crane was a space poet and "The Bridge" his vault starward. Symbol of America, space-triumphant, world-spanning, symbol too of the poet's endless need to bridge the gap between the cosmos and his straining spark. The poem has weak, even commonplace, stretches where the form seems trailing to collapse, but always "the arching strands of song" retrieve themselves, rising sometimes to crescendos in which there is a linear flash and curve as of bows dipped in lightning.

Of the last forty-eight poems "The Tower" is at once lovely and terrible in its depiction of a fractured beauty. But it stands alone. The others in this group are not as good as the poems in "White Buildings." They are at the end of the arc that fell too swiftly to the sea. Hart Crane ended his life in one of those descents that are the penalty of flight. And there is now no way of knowing what high ascensions were yet implicit in that spirit.

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Blaming the Shrew

By STELLA BENSON

IT seems to me that the time has come when the word *shrew* should change its sex. Until it does so, it is difficult to know what to say about so many of the utterances of the men writers of my generation, ranging from Aldous Huxley and Sacheverell Sitwell down to William Gerhardi and Beverley Nichols. All these young men, it seems to me, when they write about people, write in a shrewish way.

I suggest that there are several more or less difficult stages of justice to which a writer about human beings must at least try to attain before his work can be considered really civilized or mature. It is, for instance, difficult:

To be just about persons one knows and understands and loves,
To be just about persons one does not know and does not understand and loves,
To be just about persons one does not know, does not understand, and dislikes,
To be just about persons one knows and understands and dislikes,
To be just about persons who have actually injured one's vanity,
To be just about oneself.

I cannot recall one of the men writers of the generation I am thinking of, who has reached stage three—much less the more interesting and difficult four, five, and six. I cannot imagine any reason for writing about human beings at all, without trying to be just—except the reason of being very young. The young (happy creatures) must be allowed to be personal; self-exhibition must be allowed to be the inspiring motive of practically all very young writers——and it is as reasonable and charming as the male or female flapper's craving to be naughty—be noisy—be drunk—be *seen*. It is natural for very young creatures to wish their brains and bodies to be seen working. If, when these wheels of youth go round, the stuffy old public, looking on uneasily, gets a few sparks in its eyes—that is what the stuffy old public must expect from the very young, and what the very young have a right to emit. But surely the mature brain must presently realize that the going round of wheels is not in itself a unique exercise, and that the understanding is not interesting at all except as a sensitive instrument connecting the individual with a world of other individuals.

God forbid that I should want only the Sweetness and Light in our neighbor seen or recorded. I only ask that his bones should be seen, and that the poor fellow should be recorded as a tower of bones *looking out*—not as a bladder of impenetrable and odd skin *being looked at*. There are a tremendous lot of things to be said about bones—but they all begin with *they are*—not with *they ought to be*. All the shrewish writers write exclusively in terms of *ought*, and *ought* is a word, I think, that can be applied only to trespassers. People who take sides, when writing about human beings, are trespassers upon the rights of bones. Second-rate writers always have taken sides. The old second-rate writers sided with the orthodox—the new side with the unorthodox—and everybody takes sides about impersonal ideas. But bones have no sides. It seems to me that we should at once see this to be true if, for instance, a biologist were to try and explain his theories in terms of *ought* and *ought not*. The scientist's *ought* is only necessary for the demolition of pretence—the novelist's for the prosecution of trespassers—but nobody can write *ought* and *ought not* about things that *are*, and at the same time write sense. *Ought* the leopard to change his spots? *Ought* black to be white? *Ought* Mr. Smith to be as fine a fellow as Mr. Jones?

I have imagined—(I suppose because I write this while crossing the Pacific)—a most unlikely thing—a small ship with twenty-six of our foremost men writers as her passengers—each man accompanied by his relations, true loves, or friends. After a short period of mutual suspicion and writings in little notebooks, A must be imagined as seizing B by the arm and saying—(I must be excused if my shrews speak in the traditional female-sounding shrewish way—I don't really know how male post-war intellectuals address one another in real life)—"Oh, my *dear*—have you seen that perfectly *priceless* old thing in greenish-black, sitting on a binnacle or what not, along there—"

"No—where, A, do show me—"

"She must have escaped from a *museum*, my dear—positively. . . . You *must* follow her about and write one of your *too* devastating little sketches — There! Look—I *ask* you!"

"Where?—oh—*there*. . . . Oh rot, my dear A—there's nothing funny about her. Why, that's my—"

"Why *B!* Nothing funny? But she's *exactly* the type you wrote so *killingly* about in last month's *Wilful Porcupine*—an elderly virgin — the kind that sits in her bath looking down at her scrawny legs and wonders if Mr. Right will *ever* come along—the kind that puts on fourteen high-necked flannel under-garments and would turn purple and have spasms if a man saw her within ten yards of the W. C. The kind that—as you so delightfully put it—"

"Yes, yes, but listen, A. That's Bunno — my old nurse—it's all quite different when Bunno's in question. Why, as a matter of fact I *have* written a little sketch about Bunno lately—she's a marvellous person, and I owed her a tribute. If I could tell you the stories she used to tell me when I was feverish, as a child—all about a purely imaginary north pole—so cool—; if I could describe to you the comforting creaking of her stays as she got ready for bed in the dark so as not to wake me up by lighting a candle—and the amusing way she used to score off Mrs. Paterson, the cook, when there was something wrong with the nursery meals. She has what is called, I believe, a *pawky wit;* I could tell you things—if only I could imitate her quiet Yorkshire accent. . . . Oh, hang it all, A, you're talking about something you've no knowledge of—"

"I'm sorry, B, to have spoken thoughtlessly; I just happened to remember that pitiless study of yours, 'Amelia Scraggs, Spinster of This Parish,'—so I naturally thought you'd like to be shown an apparently flawless example of the spinster species."

"Somehow I should never have dreamed of connecting Bunno with that sketch; I can't exactly tell you why, but *Spinster*—in that tone of voice—doesn't seem to describe Bunno at all. There are very much funnier oddities on this ship than Bunno, believe me. Look at this *Thing* coming along now—just *look*—the wig in two shades—the painted Cupid's bow—the determined fat fist thrust through the nerveless arm of poor young X. . . . Have you noticed the jelly-like, lascivious thrill that goes through that monstrous body every time she sees a man under thirty—how she bears down on the poor wretch like a pirate under full sail? Well, well, poor old X is in for it now. . . . A widow, I bet—Mrs. Harry Dann—poor Mr. Dann died in self-defense in the nineties. . . . There's something that deserves no mercy, A—look at its famished, sagging eyes under charcoaled eyelids. . . . Think of *that* in its bath, if you must think of baths. The—why, A, what's the matter? Have I said anything to annoy you?"

"Oh nothing—nothing—absolutely nothing—except that it's my mother you seem to imagine you're hitting off so smartly. You don't know, of course, that mother was—and still is—one of the vital figures of our lifetime; half the notable men of the last forty years have loved her—and most of my own friends—fellers of our own generation—find her better company than the movie-modelled flappers and cultured young matrons you meet nowadays. You don't know what an *individual* my mother *is*—she's all *color*—she goes about in a dazzle of color and rather loud laughter and dropped gloves and floating scarves catching in things and breaking strings of beads and idiotically warm-hearted adventures—she's color personified, and if she puts a little on out of a paintbox—why, that's part of the game. Smell that scent—isn't it too awful—yet its awfulness is somehow adorable, some of us think. She *won't* grow old, and nobody except supercilious smart-alecks like you could see her as old. . . . Why, B, how can you be so blind? Can't you see that mother's *authentic*? We don't make that brand now. Compare her with that girl playing bridge over there—cold, lifeless, pure, and predatory . . ."

THE LATE STELLA BENSON

But of course B sees the cold, lifeless, pure, predatory girl as something quite different—as a development, perhaps, from a gruff, smutty, eccentric, young sister of twelve. . . . And so it all goes on.

I once saw a movie—a cartoon—in which, in all the characters, windows opened at critical moments, showing their hearts beating, their stomachs digesting, their souls yearning, their consciences pricking, their ideas forming. When these windows open—and there is no body so ridiculous that it has no windows—the wild *me* is visible at work—the bone is seen in its native habitat. And those of us who have such myopic bones ourselves that these windows in our odd and absurd neighbors open for us in vain, have no excuse for writing about human beings at all. I have been writing this little sermon on a deck-chair on a trans-Pacific liner, as I mentioned before, and round and round the deck as I wrote walked a stranger—shut—windowless—*me*-less—boneless — a filleted stranger. He was just the kind of man I find peculiarly impenetrable—an understuffed, virtuous, mincing man, wearing pince-nez, probably a resident at a Y. M. C. A. hostel in some small town; perhaps he even taught boy scouts to use a fretsaw and called them *fellows* while doing so; his nose wobbled at its thin tip when he spoke, and I am sure his favorite picture was Sir Galahad. But as he passed me, on his seventh round—he hiccoughed. And immediately windows sprang open all over him; he was like glass to me—not to my understanding (for the hiccough betrayed no soul-secret—expressed no philosophy)—but to my bones. I heard his *me* saying to itself "Tut tut—this old body's letting me down again." And though that man remained remote—too remote for my conscious sympathy or understanding—his bones hailed mine in a little far voice; his *me* shone as clearly as a mountain on the moon; he was absolutely real, not guessed at; he was a thing in himself, a thing in relation to himself, a thing that was no business of mine, a thing looking out—not only a thing being looked at. Shrewishness, I believe, then, is simply this—a refusal or inability to see bones in relation to themselves. Ideas can be known through our perceptions; human bones only through our perceptions plus their own perceptions.

I find that I have chosen my examples of the victims of shrews each from the opposite sex of the shrew in question, my own near-victim being the Y. M. C. A. young man, and those of my male shrews, women. Irritation between the sexes is of course the inspiration of all shrewishness. This fact accounts, I suppose, for the outburst of male shrewishness that has distinguished English letters since the war. To begin with, the war, by robbing a large number of intelligent young men of the petulant and exhibitionist period of youth that was their due, has left us with an excess of writers whose bones have not matured at the same pace as their brains. To go on with, I find it easy to understand that women must seem exhaustingly numerous to men who survive the war, and whose friends did not. The competition of women in the field of novel writing seems to irritate men writers, and I can understand this, for I often feel irritated myself at the superior success of persons I imagine to be my inferiors—yet surely the expression of such irritation is naively illogical, for if there ever was a profession that can always find room for one more—it is book writing. The fact that inferior writers get praised beyond their deserts is, I admit, almost unbearable to shrews of both sexes. It must be particularly galling to male shrews, because more women than men are writing novels, so more bad and overpraised novels are written by women than by men. But—again because more women than men are writing—or perhaps because so many men novelists are too busy losing their temper to write good novels—it honestly seems to me that more *good* novels are written by women. In my opinion—and that of many others, I believe—a woman—(Virginia Woolf)—is the most nearly first-rate writer now alive. This also must be annoying to m[illegible] All these factors, I can well [illegible] must make the sport of puttin[illegible] Sallies and shying coconuts at [illegible] tempting one for intelligent and articulate young men of shrewish bent. These observers have shut their eyes once and for all and decided that women are *wrong*. Women love too much—they love too little—they are virgins—(oh, how abhorrent)—or they are nymphomaniacs—(how dangerous)—they are fertile—(how beastly, like cows or rabbits)—or they are barren—(the word is a reproach in itself)—they are widows (if inconsolable they ought to be merry; if merry, they ought to be inconsolable) — they are devoted daughters pushing aged mothers in bath chairs (too funny for words)—or they are free-lances—(imitating men, isn't it sickening!) — they have a profession (dirty scabs!) they have no profession—(parasites!)—they are young and innocent or old and experienced (both states are inexcusable in the female) — they have brains—(and have the insolence to flood the market with them)—they have no brains—and say the wrong thing—they are prostitutes (kick 'em hard)—they are nuns—(sticky with sublimations) — they *live*—My God, *why?* I think it would be refreshing to be Candid about the Crocodile for a change. Crocodiles have the same idiotic habit of being crocodiles as women have of being women; there are millions of superfluous crocodiles; they are mud-colored—they swim—bask—eat nigger babies — have love-affairs — give birth to baby crocodiles—and never, never have the sense to see they *ought* to have been born giraffes. . . .

The foregoing article was written for The Saturday Review *by Stella Benson on board the steamer on which she crossed the Pacific the last time before her death.*

Some years ago Augustine Birrell, whose library was recently dispersed in London, confessed, says the London *Observer*, that, lest he should be a party to disseminating their incredible dullness, he had buried his twenty-four morocco bound volumes of Hannah More in the garden amid the cheers of his family.

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The Housing Problem

THE ECONOMICS OF SHELTER. Volume II of The Evolving House. By Albert Farwell Bemis. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Technology Press. 1934. $4.

Reviewed by AYMAR EMBURY II

WE have in recent years had a perfect flood of books on housing which, in general, fall into two classes: the first written by people concerned with the bad housing of the lower paid workers, the other written by people whose theory is that in the machine age a new type of architecture should be developed. This book of Mr. Bemis's is rare and unusual in that it is primarily a survey of all the conditions which affect housing, reinforced by statistical information so far as it is possible to obtain it, and is not only without bias but with an extraordinary appreciation of the values in the most conflicting points of view.

The book is, of course, generally concerned with the smaller dwellings, not only the detached houses but the smaller units of multiple dwellings, and very properly so, since a very great percentage of all housing consists of dwellings of not over five rooms. The author first takes up the economic importance of housing, then describes, as nearly as may be described, the average present-day house from the viewpoint of its cost and its suitability. His first and necessary conclusion is that the cost of shelter is in excess of what it should be, or perhaps in excess of what it might be, since the allocation of funds in nobody's budget is fixed by any immutable law of God, of nature, or of the state. However this may be, Mr. Bemis makes a very formidable case against the cost of work done by the construction industry as opposed to all other major industries in the United States: the cost of food and clothing, and of fuel and light, has decreased since Colonial times and is still decreasing, while the cost of housing has increased.

After having driven this fact home, he considers the various items which have gone to increase the cost of housing where all other major items have been decreased. Of these the first is naturally the inclusion of a great many items which were not known in Colonial times: central heating, plumbing, electrical work, and those miscellaneous items which Mr. Bemis describes as "gadgets." But he shows, also, that the cost has been increased by the increased cost of land, by the increased cost of financing, of architectural service, of labor, of management of construction, and by government control and restriction on building. The interesting thing about Mr. Bemis's discussion of these items is that he sees very clearly why they have come about and sees, also, how difficult it is to remedy them, and blames nobody. He does not see the ultimate solution in government or state aid to housing construction since this inevitably results in private enterprise being taxed to support a competing public enterprise, and is in effect a subsidy not always well deserved. He points out, for example, that a very considerable number of people here in the United States who cannot afford decent houses can afford automobiles, and that state subsidy of housing means not that laborers are being furnished with better homes, but that the private property owners have been taxed to buy them automobiles.

The book is too densely packed with information to be readily epitomized. It is closely reasoned throughout and must be regarded as a source book rather than as offering a panacea for our present ills, although Mr. Bemis apparently finds, as have many other intelligent observers, that eventually we must come more and more to standardized construction. Just how this is to come about is not made clear, which is one of the things this reviewer likes about the book (Mr. Bemis nowhere tries to explain the inexplicable), but he points out that there is a steady tendency to standardization and to mass production of individual parts of buildings. This is unquestionably true, and unless we achieve a socialistic state it is exceedingly likely that this process will be accelerated along lines of development as in the automobile industry.

Mr. Bemis points out that an owner knows nothing about building a house; "a seventy-five dollar gadget may be of more influence than $7,500 of sound construction." An automobile he can see as an entity and not as an idea, and will know much better what he wants if he can see a house in the same way. This is very likely the answer to the housing situation, and yet the proposed spectacle of a number of standardized houses erected side by side may very easily have the esthetic quality of an open field crowded with used cars for sale. Perhaps it cannot be helped.

* *

Aymar Embury II is a New York architect who was at one time instructor in architecture at Princeton University. He is the author of a number of books, among them "The Livable House."

Some drawings made by Dostoevsky to illustrate characters in his books are reported to have been found in Moscow.

Service for the Layman

SIGNALS AND SPEECH IN ELECTRICAL COMMUNICATION. By John Mills. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1934. $2.

Reviewed by S. F. KELLY

TELL 'em what they need to know, and no more, says the author in his introduction, after quoting his assistant's description of a magneto tachometer as being "black and about the size of a potato." The remark earned for the assistant an almost mythical reputation as a popular expositor of science. John Mills's reputation has a much firmer basis, however, if the present book is a sample of his achievements along that line. Himself an inventor in the field of electrical communication, he has bravely, and very successfully, attempted to put in simple language the basic facts underlying it, and to describe some of the difficulties besetting the perfection of the telephone, the radio, the talking pictures, and television. Mathematical formulæ and diagrams being classed, in his opinion, as among those things the layman doesn't need to know, none appear in the book. Despite this self-imposed limitation he achieves an astonishing clarity in his descriptions of instruments and circuits. The account is neither dressed up in dramatic hyperbole, nor "dumbed down" to near moronic levels, but is a clearly told story addressed to intelligent people who seriously want to know something of what happens when an electric current transmits speech from distant places.

The book contains sixteen essays on various phases of the subject, each essay complete in itself, but all so knit together as to make a consecutive whole. Beginning with "The Vivisection of Speech," the author shows what happens to the various components of spoken sounds during electrical transmission and reproduction. He goes on to tell how vibrations of speech are impressed on the electric current which recreates them again, possibly thousands of miles away.

The author makes one slip in the first chapter, when discussing harmonics, overtones, and octaves. He says that the vibration rates of harmonics are two, three, four, and so on times that of the fundamental, being "whole numbers of octaves above it." Since the characteristic of an octave interval is that the higher note has *twice* the frequency of the lower, the vibration rates should, of course, be two, four, eight, sixteen, and so on times the fundamental. This slight slip may, however, be readily forgiven.

Double-Crostics: Number 23

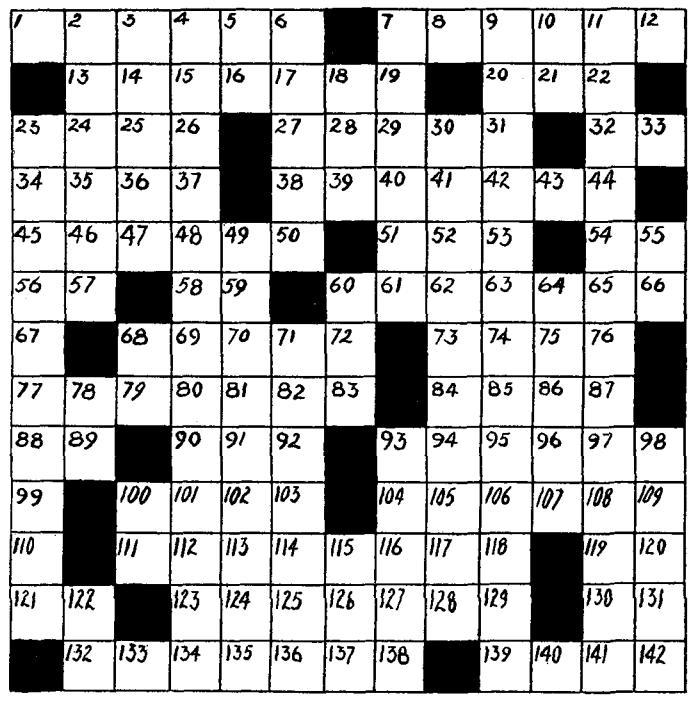
By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess eighteen words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered (these numbers appear at the beginning of each definition) and you are thereby able to tell how many letters are in the required word. When you have guessed a word each letter is to be written in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

Either before (preferably) or after placing the letters in their squares you should write the words you have guessed on the blank lines which appear to the right in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter. The initial letters of this list of words spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
I. 71-55-111-123-21-53-59-65-49-75. Italian composer (1743-1805).	
II. 113-50-140-82-54-74-85. Scene of Mrs. Radcliffe's novel.	
III. 6-78-41-89-29-19-58-100. Twilight of the gods (Norse).	
IV. 66-70-1-126-94-139-77-118. Feeds; educates.	
V. 119-142-108-5-30-38-124-79-43-14. Friend of David Copperfield.	
VI. 61-86-56-92-141-105-114-17-83. Character in "Tom Jones."	
VII. 45-25-127-67-134. Colloquial for cities or towns.	
VIII. 112-20-81-18-121-44-73-33-11-2. Character in "Ivanhoe."	
IX. 62-97-23-72. One of the Slavic languages.	
X. 107-24-90-48-69-131. Sorrows, lamentations.	
XI. 138-8-36-64-98-27-84. Fashionable, chic.	
XII. 46-60-87-26-13-57-130-37-96. An Alpine bloom.	
XIII. 93-10-35-63-31-101-133-122-32. Dickensian hypocrite.	
XIV. 115-4-136-129. A false conception in logic.	
XV. 51-128-103-125-3-34-12-68-28-132-109. City & college (comp.)	
XVI. 7-135-117-39-99. Grown to full maturity.	
XVII. 104-95-91-137-15-9-42-120-106-76. Titan hero.	
XVIII. 52-102-40-80-22-16-116-88-110-47. Old-fashioned rebuke.	



SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (NUMBER 22)

ALICE MEYNELL—"A SONG OF VARIATIONS"

I am like the blossom of an hour,
But long, long vanished sun and shower
Awoke my breath in the young world's air;
I track the past back everywhere,
Through seed and flower and seed and flower.

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The New Books

Belles Lettres

IN THE DARK BACKWARD. By H. W. Nevinson. Harcourt, Brace. 1934. $2.50.

Mr. Nevinson, almost the last of the war correspondents of the great age of that art, confesses that on his travels in historic regions he had often caught himself "living in two different ages at the same time." The seventeen sketches in this volume are the fruit of that experience—great events of the past as they reproduced themselves to Nevinson's vision when he happened to be visiting their scenes, usually in connection with current events of some importance. It is a trick that could be done very badly by the wrong man; but Nevinson, who has not only seen but thought more than most of his contemporaries, is the right man. Very seldom does he attempt a pure narrative recreation of the past, whether historical or fictitious; almost always there are reflections and correlations that tie it to the present, so that you are simultaneously conscious of both ages as of two exposures on the same negative. The result is more effective than if he had merely attempted to retell stories already well told.

There is no thread of unity except Nevinson's personality and experience, but evidently the bitter facts of modern history have not wholly rid him of nineteenth century Liberal opinions. "European history and religion have not much to boast of," he observes, "but still one may trace in them some thin thread of reason, freedom, and definite forms of art—the thin thread which was not severed at Actium." Elsewhere he remarks that the greatest change that has come about in human history is that "the old delight in cruelty, that peculiar characteristic of mankind, has in some modern races been slightly appeased." Not much to be thankful for, perhaps, but better than nothing; as you will agree when you read these reconstructions of scenes from the past which are far from the most cruel that the past could show.

E. D.

Fiction

OLD LADY'S SHOES. By Samuel Tupper, Jr. McBride. 1934. $2.

The old lady was Sally Baldwin, grande dame of Augusta, Georgia, hostess *par excellence* and the mainstay of her son Will, his wife, her nephew Harvey who was fit for nothing in life but varsity football, his wife Dorothy, who loved and was loved by Harvey's cousin Craig, and Isabel, the poor niece, who swore to stay with the old lady till she should die. Isabel wanted to marry the impoverished newspaper man, Douglas; the old lady, in return for the extracted promise, promised in her turn a cool hundred thousand, to make this alliance possible. If Isabel started out with no more than a mild affection for her aunt and a desire for that hundred thousand, almost four years of nursing turned her into an emotionless, single-minded woman, devoted to her aunt's welfare and nothing else. She came perilously close to losing Doug; the maladjusted Harvey not only lost his wife to his cousin, but his life as well, and her son Will lost not only his mother but his faith in his son Craig's integrity.

This is the story Mr. Tupper has told, in a manner and mode not even one cut removed from the most commonplace of magazine fiction. He had in it material for a novel that might have shed some light on the intricate relationships of human beings tainted with a hankering for inherited wealth. He has failed signally in making these relationships vital, the changes wrought in his protagonists convincing or moving. Though he makes it quite explicit how the separate fates of his characters hang on the ultimate death of the wealthy aunt, the reader, on reaching the conclusion, is not convinced—one, of the actuality of their dependence; two, of the power of her personality, which is many times mentioned but never once felt. The conflict in Isabel between her love for Douglas and her "duty" to her aunt is not externalized, and remains so artificial that, at the end, the author can make four years as nothing and, despite many assurances that her love for Doug is dead, restore her to him within the space of five ludicrously mechanical pages. This is a sincere but inept performance.

A. C. B.

THE JEALOUS HOUSE. By Clarence Budington Kelland. Harpers. 1934. $2.50.

This is the last volume of Mr. Kelland's trilogy on the banking family of Van Horn, and it reads as if he had got tired of his story and were in a hurry to get through. The background of banking history from 1885 to 1914 he knows well enough, and the interpolated paragraphs of statistics and economic summary are more interesting than the rather wooden tale of the last of the Van Horns. The family bank had by that time become an institution, demanding sacrifice after sacrifice from individuals; but it is hard to get up much interest in the sacrifices and refusals of Jan Van Horn III. Though Mr. Kelland has borrowed for his hero some of the outstanding incidents in the life of the elder Morgan, and one or two from Bismarck for good measure, Jan remains almost a figure of burlesque.

E. D.

International

EUROPE BETWEEN WARS? By Hamilton Fish Armstrong. Macmillan. 1934. $1.25.

The question mark in the title of this book is but one among many, for, despite an apparent summer deadlock, the course of European affairs may still be considerably altered by the slightest variation in existing governments. It is natural, therefore, that Mr. Armstrong does not indulge himself in prophecies; but he does set forth a series of hypotheses which broadly cover the possible developments of the conflicting national forces which are now smoldering on the Continent.

The present alignments are easily distinguishable. France, striving to maintain her hegemony against Nazi aspirations by tightening her bonds with the Little Entente, is somewhat embarrassed by the Polish-German ten-year treaty of peace and by the friendliness of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Italy, after backing the meas-

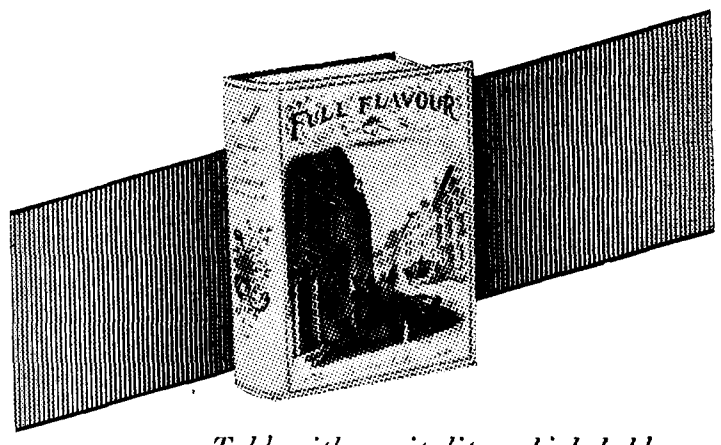
(*Continued on next page*)

Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Romance and Adventure

Trade Mark	*Label*	*Contents*	*Flavor*
THE PEEL TRAIT *Joseph C. Lincoln* (Appleton-Century: $2)	Regional Romance	Salty Cap'n Peel's daughter Lettice chose the wrong young man and pop took a long time to forgive her. Typical Lincoln Cape Cod yarn.	Down East
NONE BUT THE BRAVE *Marguerite Mooers Marshall* (Doubleday, Doran: $2.)	Romance	The ladies' newspaper columnist turns out a better than average time-killer about the depression-downed young editor who found his place in the New Hampshire home town.	Strawberry
MR. GLENCANNON *Guy Kilpatrick* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Short Stories	Collected *Saturday Evening Post* yarns of the garrulous Scottish engineer of the Inchcliffe Castle.	Salty
WAYNE OF THE FLYING W *Arthur Henry Gooden* (H. C. Kinsey: $2.)	Western	The only child of cattle King Cole was frightened when the son of her papa's old enemy returned. She learnt better.	Standard
DOUBLE LIFE *Daisy & Violet Hilton* Long & Smith	Autobiography	What it feels like to be Siamese Twins.	Curious

A Rich and Powerful New Novel



Told with a vitality which holds your unwavering interest to the end, this stirring story is a literary achievement of high and unusual merit.

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by Doris Leslie

The full life story of a lovely young Victorian rebel is here related. Rebelling against the restraints of her times, Catherine Ducroix takes over her father's business and makes of it a success which startles the London business world. Romance and conflict; vivid portrayal of the changing Victorian and Edwardian periods; characters that face life courageously—all are expertly woven into this splendid chronicle. $2.50

A Naturalist's Engrossing Adventures

ESKIMO YEAR

by George Miksch Sutton

Absorbingly entertaining, yet highly informative is this story of a year spent by a noted scientist among the Indians of Hudson Bay. Dr. Sutton adapted himself completely to the native mode of living with the result that his description of their customs and his narration of their folk-tales and myths have a distinctive veracity and color. $3.00

In Defense of Women's Humor

LAUGHING THEIR WAY

by Mary Beard and Martha Bruere

A collection of the best examples of feminine humor, in all its forms, of the last hundred years.
"It ought to be left lying around on living room tables and in guest rooms for a long time to come."—*New York Times*
"A clever and discerning book."—*Boston Herald*. $4.00

LORD READING AND HIS CASES

by Derek Walker-Smith

An engrossing story, told with vivid detail of the principal cases in which Reading appeared, among them being many of the most exciting and baffling English trials of our times. $3.50

THE QUEEN'S WIGS

by Naomi Royde-Smith

The noted English novelist here tells the exciting, colorful story of Rozel Merton, a young English woman, who unwittingly became a central figure in the plots and intrigues of the little Kingdom of Iroxla. $2.50

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Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MISS LOVEMAN, c/o *The Saturday Review*. A stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

BOOKS FOR A SIX-YEAR-OLD

R. S. M. of Chicago, Ill., wants suggestions of books—stories and poetry—to read to her six-year-old daughter. She would like nonsense rhymes and stories other than ALICE, *Kipling's* JUST SO STORIES, *and Lear's verses. Carl Sandburg's* ROOTABAGA COUNTRY, *as well as the books of Milne and Lois Lenski have, she says, been read and reread. She wishes also the Greek myths retold in suitable form for the very young child.*

OF course, if R. S. M. hadn't ruled against it I should automatically have set Lear's THE OWL AND THE PUSSY CAT and CALICO PIE, of both of which cheap editions are issued by Warne, at the head of the column. I've done it anyway, I see, unwittingly. I wonder, since she has gone back to such a classic, whether she has as yet read her little tot those other old favorites, Christina Rossetti's SING SONG (Macmillan) and Stevenson's A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES, of which the edition put out by Scribners, with illustrations by Jessie Wilcox Smith, is a particularly charming one. Brentano publishes a collection of thirty-seven familiar nursery songs, illustrated by Anne Anderson and edited by Horace Mansion, and called OLD ENGLISH NURSERY SONGS, which could be read as well as sung. Then there's Walter de la Mare's PEACOCK PIE (Holt) which contains that delectable nonsense jingle beginning

Ann, Ann!
Come! quick as you can!
There's a fish that talks
In the frying pan.

And while I'm on the subject of De la Mare I mustn't forget the NUMBER ONE JOY STREET (Appleton-Century), which contains stories by him and others. If these are a bit difficult for a six-year-old they could be amended to her needs in the reading aloud. Of course she will delight in MILLIONS OF CATS (Coward-McCann), by Wanda Gag, with its amusing text and no less amusing illustrations. Shortly after the book appeared, some six or seven years ago, the publisher told me that one of the principal bookshops in town had buried it under the counter, for as long as it lay exposed no one would buy anything else. Another recent book that has been taken to the child heart is Margery W. Bianco's THE VELVETEEN RABBIT, OR HOW TOYS BECOME REAL (Doubleday, Doran), a really charming tale as is also her THE LITTLE WOODEN DOLL (Macmillan). And then, of course, there are those standbys, Beatrix Potter's stories of Peter Rabbit (Warne), and that book so many present-day parents used to wait breathless for as it appeared in the pages of *St. Nicholas*, Palmer Cox's THE BROWNIES (Appleton-Century). At what age does one begin to enjoy Joel Chandler Harris's UNCLE REMUS (Appleton-Century)? As I look back upon my childhood I can't seem to remember any period when the Tar Baby and Brer' Fox and Daddy Jake and all the rest of Harris's creations were not my beloved intimates. Any child would delight in the darkey dialect, it seems to me, even if he needed a few more years than six fully to appreciate the stories. As for the Greek myths, I read them first myself in the version which Hawthorne somewhat readjusted to contemporary times, THE WONDER BOOK and TANGLEWOOD TALES (Duffield publishes the edition with Maxfield Parrish illustrations.) But it seems to me R. S. M. could not do better than to get Padraic Colum's ORPHEUS (Macmillan).

There used to be, when I was a child, a game of mythology which consisted of illustrated cards each containing a brief account of some famous mythological personality or event. Of course when you were old enough, you played to see how many you could win by knowing the answer to the question your opponent asked, but when you were very young you looked at the pictures and had some grown-up read you the text. I learned most of my mythology that way, and still see Neptune or Charon or many another as he looked at the top of those cards.

HISTORY IN FICTION

N. V. S. of Sunbury, Pa., *who is to become a teacher of high school history in the fall, is anxious to secure a list of books, preferably fiction, though biography will also do, which will make events and personalities in ancient, medieval, and modern European and in American history come alive to her pupils and will also interest herself.*

The difficulty is, not to find books for N. V. S., but to cut the list to manageable proportions. For ancient history she might turn her pupils out to pasture first of all in such standard works as Charles Kingsley's HYPATIA (Everyman's Library), a tale of Alexandria and of dying Greek culture, Sienkiewicz's QUO VADIS (Crowell), a story of the time of Nero, Bulwer-Lytton's THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII (Everyman's Library), Lew Wallace's BEN HUR (Harpers), Walter Pater's MARIUS THE EPICUREAN (Holt: Home Library), Merejkowski's THE DEATH OF THE GODS (Modern Library), a novel playing about Julian, the last pagan emperor of Rome, and William Stearns Davis's A FRIEND OF CÆSAR (Macmillan). If N. V. S. gives her pupils these books to read she will be serving the purposes of literature courses as well as history, as they are classics of their kind. If I were she I'd sandwich in now Malory's MORTE D'ARTHUR (Everyman's Library) and then go on to Kingsley's HEREWARD THE WAKE (Everyman's Library), Lytton's LAST OF THE BARONS (Holt: Home Library), and Charles Reade's THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH (Everyman's Library). I haven't included any title by Scott, but that's simply because I don't know which to choose. I'd like to call the roll of his novels, recommending one after the other of the magnificent lot—IVANHOE, KENILWORTH, QUENTIN DURWARD, REDGAUNTLET, WOODSTOCK, what you will. Only the other day I had lunch with a busy editor, whose work being somewhat lightened by the summer, was reading his way through all Scott's works, and exulting in them as he went. There's that tale, too, of Lowell—of how he lay ill in bed when a friend came in and inquired how he felt. "Why ask? I'm reading Scott."

But to return to a list that won't keep small. There's Dumas for French history, and Victor Hugo also, and there are Dickens's A TALE OF TWO CITIES and Felix Gras's THE REDS OF THE MIDI (Appleton), in addition on the Revolution, and Tolstoy's WAR AND PEACE (Modern Library Giant) and, to add a recent title or two, Manuel Komroff's CORONET (Coward-McCann) and Phoebe Fenwick Gaye's VIVANDIÈRE (Liveright) on the Napoleonic era. And to throw chronology to the winds, there are, too, George Eliot's ROMOLA for Savonarola's ITALY, and Thackeray's HENRY ESMOND for the England of Queen Anne. And now for America—Cooper, of course, THE SPY, THE PILOT (there's a recent tale which also takes Paul Jones for hero which should be read, James Boyd's DRUMS, published by Scribners), all, in fact, if N. V. S. wants to give an idea of the American background. S. Weir Mitchell's HUGH WYNNE, Winston Churchill's RICHARD CARVEL (Macmillan), Stephen Crane's THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE and Kenneth Roberts's recent RABBLE IN ARMS (Doubleday, Doran). Before I go on to mention some biographies, I must throw in for good measure a few of the books I forgot as I went along—Donn Byrne's MESSER MARCO POLO (Scribners), Rafael Sabatini's SCARAMOUCHE (Houghton Mifflin), and the one-time best-seller WHEN KNIGHTHOOD WAS IN FLOWER (Grosset & Dunlap), by Charles Major. As to biography, I pick at random from the many books that might be mentioned Bernard Fay's BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (Little, Brown), Stefan Zweig's MARIE ANTOINETTE (Viking), Lytton Strachey's QUEEN VICTORIA and EMINENT VICTORIANS (Harcourt, Brace), Carl Sandburg's LINCOLN (Harcourt, Brace), Gamaliel Bradford's CONFEDERATE PORTRAITS and UNION PORTRAITS (Houghton Mifflin), Philip Guedalla's SUPERS AND SUPERMEN (Harpers), Theodore Roosevelt's AUTOBIOGRAPHY (Scribners), Allan Nevins's GROVER CLEVELAND (Dodd, Mead), and Lloyd Lewis's SHERMAN: FIGHTING PROPHET (Harcourt, Brace).

AMERICA OF THE AMERICANS

D. H. A. of Morganton, N. C., *says that the book club to which she belongs plans to study American history in modern fiction this coming season, and wants to start with the Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas. "Is there anything," she asks, "on these Indians besides "The Fair God," "The House of Dawn," and MacLeish's* CONQUISTADOR? *If no fiction, can you name other sources of material?"*

There is fiction, but despite that fact I think the Club would be well advised to read as background for the novels such books as Prescott's CONQUEST OF MEXICO and CONQUEST OF PERU, and such a recent work as Philip A. Means's ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS OF THE ANDES (Scribners). As for fiction, H. Rider Haggard wrote a tale of Mexico in his most sensational vein, MONTEZUMA'S DAUGHTER (Longmans, Green), which recounts the exciting adventures of an Englishman in Mexico between 1515 and 1525, and introduces Montezuma, Cortes, etc. Thomas A. Janvier produced in THE AZTEC TREASURE HOUSE (Harpers) what he calls a "romance of contemporaneous antiquity," a story in which a group of modern men discover an ancient Aztec city. Into it he has woven considerable antiquarian lore. Another tale introducing legendary history into its chronicle is William Dudley Foulke's MAYA (Bobbs, Merrill), which plays in Yucatan. Panama and Peru of the time of the Conquest are the background of A. Bradford Hudson's THE CRIMSON CONQUEST (McClure), and the Mexico of Cortes and Montezuma of Arthur D. Howden Smith's CONQUEROR (Lippincott). The very latest novel in the field is Blair Niles's MARIA PALUNA, a story of Guatemala at the period of the Conquest.

ROMANCE OR SECURITY?

Ance was a good husband and a dependable farmer. But something inside Deborah Deane responded to Jilson, the artistic one, who gave color and meaning to her life in the picturesque mountains of North Carolina. The author of "Thursday April" tells an absorbing story with deftness, insight and a delightful humor. $2.50

THE HILLS STEP LIGHTLY

by Alberta Pierson Hannum

AND PUBLISHED BY MORROW

The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

ures of Dollfuss and cementing better commercial relations with both Austria and Hungary, is temporarily relieved of the apprehension of an *Anschluss* or a Hapsburg restoration. Hitler, though increasing armaments, has toned down his foreign policy in the face of German credit difficulties and is addressing himself to the task of maintaining his control at home. England hopes to remain aloof from discords that may arise between these groups, but must choose, sooner or later, to direct her influence along the "way of force" or that of persuasion and peace.

Mr. Armstrong estimates this situation from the standpoint of each of these national combinations and indicates the alternatives which face them. His liberal sympathies are reflected in his distrust of German aims and methods, which appear most likely to occasion a clash of arms. On the whole, the book is a clear analysis of the economic warfare that is already being waged abroad and a good summary of the possibilities of actual fighting in the next six months. R. G.

Miscellaneous

SECURITY SPECULATION: Its Economic Effect. By John T. Flynn. Harcourt, Brace. 1934. $3.

The subtitle indicates the aspect of stock speculation to which Mr. Flynn's book is devoted; and in a prefatory note he states the *raison d'être* of the book. "It is an almost incredible fact that no one has attempted to make a study of the economic effects of security speculation." While "the art of playing the market, the study of security values, and the difficult business of investment" have been the subject of a multitude of books," the economic effects of security speculation have failed to invite the researches of any first-rate economist." What Mr. Flynn proposes to discuss, therefore, is not the individual interest either of speculators or of investors, but the public interest as affected by the existence and character of security speculation. The purpose thus clearly announced is faithfully executed in a book filled with important information, both general and specific, and marked by able analysis and acute argumentation.

Among the broad questions which Mr. Flynn discusses, some require considerable subtlety of thought, and others turn on practical consideration of concrete effects. Of the former class one conspicuous instance is the question of the degree in which stock speculation is mere gambling; another is that of the distinction between speculation and investment. Both of these questions are examined with acumen and, in spite of Mr. Flynn's strong predilection toward an adverse judgment, with fairness as well as vigor.

As regards the practical economic effects of stock speculation—which, after all, constitute the *main* subject-matter of the book—Mr. Flynn's conclusions are by no means in accord with the opinions that are prevalent in high financial circles, or indeed with those that are entertained by probably the great majority of economic authorities. He holds that even apart from dishonest or otherwise objectionable practices, the public benefits usually asserted to result from stock speculation are largely illusory. He emphatically rejects the claims of the practice of short selling as a wholesome influence on the stock market; and he even goes so far as to deny the vital necessity (though of course he does not deny the desirability) of maintaining the continuous marketability of corporation securities. However all this may be, Mr. Flynn has written an able and valuable book, which deserves the earnest attention of all who are interested in its subject.

F. F.

Brief Mention

Alfred A. Knopf is publishing an unusually timely and handy *Atlas of Current Affairs* ($1.50) which is not at all the ordinary atlas but an extensive series of outline maps intelligently annotated with a page of descriptive and explanatory text for each. The idea is to give in brief space and with an accompanying map the current state of affairs in each country or section of a country where something important to the news has been happening, is happening, or is likely to happen. This book is a *vade mecum* for readers of current newspapers, magazines, and books of current history, politics, and economics. An unusually extensive and rather bulky anthology of *Elizabethan and Stuart Plays* has been edited by Baskerville, Heltzel, and Nethercot (Holt: $5). *The Story of American Furniture*, by Thomas Hamilton Ormsbee (Macmillan: $4.50), seems to be better organized chronologically, more critical, and more informative than most books on this often treated subject. The illustrations are well selected. It seems to be a particularly good brief handbook. The second series of Cox and Freeman's *Prose Preferences* contains well chosen selections from strictly modern authors, both English and American, including such recent entrants as Lardner, Waugh, Caldwell, and Evelyn Scott. We must note also a useful and interesting set of pictorial maps in two plates which present *Geologic History at a Glance*, compiled by L. W. and G. L. Richards (Stanford University Press: 80c).

Latest Books Received

ART

The Technique of Painting. H. Hiler. Oxford Univ. Pr. $3.75.

BELLES LETTRES

Collected Essays, Papers, etc., of Robert Bridges. Oxford Univ. Pr. $1. *On Life and Essays on Religion.* L. Tolstoy. Oxford Univ. Pr. (World's Classics). 80 cents.

BIOGRAPHY

Vae Victis. J. Presland. Appleton. *Sidney's Stella.* J. M. Purcell. Oxford Univ. Pr. $1.50. *John Florio.* F. A. Yates. Cambridge Univ. Pr. (Macmillan). $5.25.

DRAMA

A Jewish Tragedy. B. Bernard. Bloch. $2.

NEW EDITIONS

The Philosophical Writings of Leibnitz. Selected and translated. M. Morris. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 70 cents. *St. Ives.* R. L. Stevenson. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 70 cents. *French Short Stories of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.* Selected. F. C. Green. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 70 cents. *Marius the Epicurean.* W. Pater. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 70 cents. *Aristotle's Poetics. Demetrius on Style.* Ed. T. A. Moxon. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 70 cents. *The Citizen of the World and the Bee.* O. Goldsmith. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 70 cents.

POETRY

A Garland of Green Mountain Song. Ed. H. H. Flanders. Northfield, Vt.: Peach. *Cyclone.* A. Urbovska. New York: Fritts. $2.

RELIGION

The Way of Christ. J. T. Addison. Houghton. $1.25. *Dear Bob.* R. S. Cushman. Abingdon. $1. *A Christian Manifesto.* E. Lewis. Abingdon. $2.

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PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

WHIRLWIND, turned literary; swamped by words, clippings, ideas, lecturing, needs woman secretary, 25-30, adventuresome assistance keeping up with own productiveness; offers home with family, small city, nominal pay start. Box 915.

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IS THERE anybody anywhere in need of a cheerful companion, nurse or home-maker? Box 918.

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WHY BE LONELY? Enclose stamp. Box 434, Spokane, Washington.

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N. Y. WOMAN of social standing, widely travelled, knowing clothes, interior decorating, desires part-time N. Y. position lady's companion, receptionist, shopping, chaperoning. REASONABLE.

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THE LONDON PRESS is taking notice of Edward DeVere as the real "William Shake-speare." The Morning Post quoted Shaw Desmond's opinion that the Oxford hypothesis was steadily undermining orthodoxy. The Daily Sketch advised all who were interested in the problem to read Mr. Looney's "Shake-speare Identified." In time, the Paediculi over here, excepting those who derive incomes from text-book prolonging the myth, will see the light and acknowledge the Truth. George Frisbee.

HOUSEKEEPER, companion. Refined capable woman, 40, with car, desires position where brains are more necessary than brawn. Box 921.

ALTRUISTS! Seek associates to tender $5 monthly; publishing experimental magazine (stories, verse, essays, reviews). Box 922, *Saturday Review.*

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ROCKWELL KENT is in Greenland, but his HOW I MAKE A WOODCUT (with five illustrations) may still be had for 12c, postpaid. ESTO PUBLISHING COMPANY, Box 46-V, Pasadena, California.

MAIL BOX EMPTY? The Mixing Bowl tells what to do, 5c. 60 E. Ferry, Detroit.

CAN anyone afford to lend young Canadian journalist (seven years experience) $5,000 for cautious publishing venture? Character only security. Box 923.

MIDDLE-AGED, somewhat disillusioned, stubbornly aspiring, still unpublished writer desires correspondence with one similarly situated. Object: mutual encouragement and helpful criticism. Box 924.

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After the present instalment of the Compleat Collector the department is to be conducted alternately by Mr. Rollins and Mr. Winterich instead of, as in the past, having its columns a collaboration of the two.

Mr. Updike's Own Story

NOTES ON THE MERRYMOUNT PRESS AND ITS WORK. By Daniel Berkeley Updike. With a Bibliographical List of Books Printed at the Press 1893-1933, *by Julian Pearce Smith. Cambridge: Harvard University Press,* 1934. $7.50. *25 copies on Glaslan paper, signed,* $25.

THE record of forty years of distinguished printing by the master of the press is something of an event in America. Few presses survive that long without profound changes in purpose as well as in personnel; fewer yet have so accomplished and polished an historian; and even fewer deserve or receive such careful cataloguing of their issues as the Merrymount Press. Its story has been well told so far as an outsider could tell it, in Mr. W. A. Dwiggins's article in the third volume of the *Fleuron,* in 1924, and by Mr. George P. Winship in "The Merrymount Press of Boston," issued by Herbert Reischner of Vienna in 1929, and in isolated newspaper accounts. As objective records of the press these accounts are admirable both in text and illustration, but they needed the supplementing which this new book gives.

The present volume owes its existence to Mr. Julian Pearce Smith of New York, who many years ago began a catalogue

[illegible] cataloguing has been done with a nice balance of fullness and restraint. Sufficient information is given without attempting all the finicky detail which modern bibliography is more and more addicted to. And it is needless to say that the typographic form of the catalogue is simple and lacking in bibliographical absurdities. For the first time there is available an authoritative list of Merrymount Press items, those hitherto existing being much curtailed data in exhibition catalogues. It will be of very great value for future bibliographical use.

Two other minor items deserve notice: the illustrations and the specimen of type faces. The pictures show thirteen views of the various premises of the Press in four of its Boston locations, and if hardly typical in general of what a printing-office of the period looked like, prove that the Merrymount Press was neither "the plant" nor "ye printerie." Sanity and good taste have marked Mr. Updike's career, both in his printing house and in his typographical equipment. The latter has depended mechanically on the usual adequate presses and, so far as type is concerned, on "survivals" of the better letter forms. He has never issued a "specimen book of types in use," rightly holding, I believe, that the selection of type faces was a matter for the competent printer rather than for the ill informed client. It is, however, interesting to have in this volume a showing of twenty-three of the chief types with which he has done his work—and without exception they are distinguished type faces.

Mr. Updike's own account of his life work will be, however, of most interest to the student of American printing. It is told in some fifty pages of lucid narrative of the beginnings of the Press, its various locations, and its printed products, with occasional references to its personnel through the years. Mr. Updike's unique position in American printing, shared with Mr. Rogers, is in the transition from the "chilly" printing (to use his phrase) of DeVinne and Houghton to the infinitely more sophisticated work of the present day: possibly never again in American printing will anyone have a like opportunity. And possibly also, the commercial conditions surrounding the printing industry, which have hardly changed since the art was introduced about the beginning of the commercial era, may change. In this connection it is interesting to note the attitude of Professor Norton toward his friend who established the Merrymount Press: as a small place on Chestnut Street he approved of it, as a commercial organization seeking larger quarters on Summer Street, he felt that it had "gone over to the enemy." That the Merrymount Press has succeeded beyond most printing offices in keeping its æsthetic ideals before its commercial success (while achieving enough of the latter to pay its bills and continue in business) is of the essence of Mr. Updike's life work, due, one supposes partly to his love of order and partly to the fortunate alliance with Mr. John Bianci, his partner. It may reasonably be supposed that Mr. Updike is the last of the great printers who have been able to maintain high ideals of craftsmanship and a successful business career.

The volume is produced in Mr. Updike's usual good taste and finished style, the trade edition so well handled that the limited edition seems a bit supererogatory.

R.

A Rhyming Regiment

FAME, said Emily Dickinson, is a fickle food upon a shifting plate. Who today reads Carrie Christian Kunkely, Mary Hunt-McCaleb Odom, Josephine Puett Spoonts, Felix De Monnecove, E. S. Tway, or L. C. Wedgefuth?

You will be able to acquaint yourself with a specimen of the work of each mem-

[illegible] and published by him at Detroit in 1898. Subtitled "A Complete Collection of Newspaper Verse During the Recent War With Spain," this amazing volume must almost live up to that large description.

"Spanish-American War Songs" measures six by ten by two and one-half inches and weighs three and one-half pounds. Its 984 pages enshrine examples of the work of 1,075 poets (the count has not been, and will not be, rechecked).

The Witherbee compendium is a noble monument to its editor's industry and an accurate metronome of the emotional tempo of the period it celebrates. Any reader of Walter Millis's "The Martial Spirit," who regarded that superb study of the growing pains of an assertive nationalism as in the slightest degree awry, will be convinced by a dip into Witherbee that Mr. Millis, in his effort to avoid the grotesque, halted well this side of it.

It is incredible that the editor needed to skirmish around for filling—or perhaps the newspapers of the day clipped Washington Allston, George D. Boker, Thomas Dunn English, John Pierpont, and other minor notables of an earlier era, and Mr. Witherbee in his zeal for inclusiveness, put them in his book.

The great shortcoming of the anthology is its failure to identify sources save of forty anonymous pieces, and these are credited to the papers in which they were originally published.

Even with this defect, "Spanish-American War Songs" is a definite and authentic example of Americana. It has, however, a more important claim to collector recognition. Vrest Orton discovered, too late to include it in his valuable "Dreiserana" (1929), that it contains Theodore Dreiser's first apperance in a book—seven six-line stanzas called "Exordium." Here, too, is the first book appearance of Stephen Crane's "The Blue Battalions," published as "Lines" in the *Philistine* for June, 1898. "The Blue Battalions" has nothing to do with the war—neither does Edwin Arlington Robinson's sonnet "The One Chord," which presumably here first appears between covers. These three units give his compilation a bibliographical distinction beyond anything that Sidney A. Witherbee ever dreamed. Or perhaps not—he doubtless dreamed high.

J. T. W.

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The PHŒNIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE diary of our first man of letters, written by *Washington Irving* when he was only twenty years old, will be published this fall by the Oxford University Press. It is a record of a journey made more than a century and a quarter ago up the Hudson in a sailing vessel, through the wilderness between Albany and Oswegatchie, into Canada. Irving never forgot the experiences which he recounts in this diary: the killing of the deer in the Black River, the struggle of the wagons through the trails of the forest in the midst of a storm, and the encounter with a fugitive from the British garrison at Montreal. . . . *The Maharajah of Pithapuram* has been the first one to order the new edition of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," illustrated by *Rockwell Kent*, which Covici-Friede have announced for this autum. He directed that the book be sent to his palace, "Gulaby," Adyar, Madras, India! . . . According to that famous ghost-story writer, *Professor James*, one of the best living writers of ghost-tories is *Russell Wakefield*, son of *Bishop Wakefield* and brother of *Gilbert Wakefield*, the playwright. He has already given us "They Return at Evening" and "Old Man's Beard," is a student of the occult, and now in September Doubleday, Doran will publish his "Hearken to the Evidence," an eerie psychological murder-story. . . . *Frances Whiting* has been appointed Associate Editor of *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, succeeding *Kathryn Bourne*, who was lately made Fiction Editor of *Harper's Bazaar*. Miss Whiting is a Vassar graduate, has been in newspaper work, on the staff of *Musical America*, and later connected with broadcasting. . . . *Richard Aldington* broke his knee-cap this summer in a motor accident in Austria. . . . The University of Pennsylvania Press recently completed arrangements to act as publishers for the American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in America, established by *Benjamin Franklin*. . . . *Old Bill Woodward*, who has debunked some of our national heroes, has been spending some time at Vichy, taking the waters, and also writing a book for Farrar & Rinehart. . . . *Ruth Suckow* is at the MacDowell Colony, Peterboro, New Hampshire; as are *Carl Carmer*, *Frances Frost*, *Tess Slesinger*, and various other writers. Farrar & Rinehart will publish Miss Suckow's new novel, "The Folks," on October first. . . . *Max Miller*, whose "I Cover the Waterfront" was a sensation, has just had a new book published by Dutton, "The Second House from the Corner." *Harry Carr* of the *Los Angeles Times* has remarked that Mr. Miller's "second house" is really the fourth. But "Authors," says he, "don't know much about arithmetic." Mr. Carr spent a week-end with Mr. Miller and said that during that time the author was a great deal more interested in "wading up and down moonlit beaches—making sudden nose dives after grunion that flash over the sand like silver streaks" than in his literary career. . . . *Noel Pierce*, who has had a play on Broadway with *Francine Larrimore* in it, has sold another for production this fall, and now has a Hollywood contract, has also disposed of her first short-story to the *Cosmopolitan*, and "Night Club Hostess" appears in the September issue. Her story was bought by the first magazine to which it was submitted. The heroine of the tale is a composite of *Sophie Tucker*, *Texas Guinan*, and *Mae West*. . . . Football lovers can get a complete pictorial and statistical review of the American game. It is edited by *Christy Walsh*, assisted by eighteen contributing editors some of whose names are famous for coaching. There are more than a thousand pictures in "Intercollegiate Football," which Doubleday, Doran have just published. There are also complete records of one hundred and twenty universities. It might be well to keep this book in mind for some son of the family around Christmas time! . . . *Mrs. Vachel Lindsay* calls my attention to a poem, "Thieves of Mercy," by *E. Olan James*, who teaches verse writing and the short story at Mills College, California. The poem was privately printed by Mills this last spring to honor the author's twentieth anniversary as a professor there. Mrs. Lindsay is in the process of acquiring a Ph.D. at Mills. *Edward Davison* lectured there this summer, as he did at other colleges in the West, on poetry. . . . *John Hervey* of Chicago has burst out to me in a letter concerning modern magazines, for which he has very little use. There's a good deal to what he says. He also takes a crack at modern books. I am not prepared to agree with his whole-souled pessimism, but there's some excuse for it. . . . *Lilian C. B. McA. Mayer*, President of the Barnard Astronomical Society of Knoxville, Tennessee, sends me the following recollection of *Elinor Wylie*, when they once met in Washington.

Once we walked in Jackson Park,
Elinor and I;
White drifts from April boughs
And warm blue sky.

Let this be our theme, I said,—
Blossom-banked snows;
As one in a dream she turned—
"How cold the wind blows!"

White, unforgotten day,
Too rare to lose.
But I never wrote a thing. . . .
She wrote "Velvet Shoes."

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

☞Split second exposure No. 4: Away from the rheumatic wheezes of the muffled trumpets, the gurgling deep-throaty hi-di-hi's and ho-di-ho's—away from the coiling movements of the snake hip dances of Lenox Ave. a short, stocky Negro gentleman is pulling off a big time culture stunt in swinging The Bookshop of Augustus Granville Dill at 236 West 135th Street in the bull's-eye sector of Harlem. Cross the threshold of Augustus Granville Dill's tome parlor and you're in one of the niftiest retail book joints South of the Harlem River. Strictly a solo shop as far as Negro ownership is concerned in the vicinity, Mr. Dill has gathered about him a flock of Grade-A bookish Whites and Negroes whose exacting book demands are carefully serviced by this Negro Bookman. A small, but complete rental library department is run in connection with the bookshop and surprisingly few books by Negro authors are placed in this division. Mr. Dill explains why this is so: It is his belief that the better books written by members of his race should be bought and cherished; they should become part of one's library in every Negro home. Many white writers are popular with the reading choices of Mr. Dill's large Negro patronage. *Anthony Adverse* is going big. Pearl Buck's *Mother*, *Sons* and *The Good Earth* are much in demand. Stribling and Sinclair Lewis items are steady money-makers for the shop. However, the best sellers are among the Negro writers with Langston Hughes's *Ways of White Folks* heading the parade in the fiction column and James Weldon Johnson's *Making My Way* leading by plenty in the non-fiction brigade. For the records the Hughes book is the best selling title that Mr. Dill has had since the shop was born. Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* is a slow but steady seller while *Uncle Tom's Cabin* crashes through about twice a year for a sale. Dr. DuBois' *Black Folks* is another of the steady pluggers. The bookshop of Augustus Dill is a small but complete one. A grand piano shares much of the floor space, for the gent is an accomplished piano-thumper and has appeared as accompanist with Roland Hayes. During the summer months Dill does the organ pumping at the Community Church. The walls are covered with a mass of photographs, paintings and diplomas. An A.B. and A.M. from Atlanta University and an A.B. from Harvard. Mr. Dill is a scholar of rare attainments. He has served as business manager of the *Crisis* for fifteen years and has contributed a load of stuff in the form of reviews to many periodicals. Mr. Dill's book buying act is a slow, deliberate one. If the book is by a Negro author it must be read first and approved before it is placed on sale. There is no question of censorship involved in this procedure, but it is this gentleman's sincere desire to bring to his people worthy works of literature. Thus the casual customer and the steady trade have no hesitancy in taking the recommendation of Mr. Dill. If you're Harlem bound some day and if you should hear the musical tones of Bach, Mozart or Beethoven smacking against your ears—give a look around—and see if it comes from the Bookshop of Augustus Granville Dill.

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